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THE WORKS OF

ALFRED

LORD TENNYSON

VOL. IV

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.
1896

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QUEEN MARY

A DRAMA

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

QUEEN MARY.
PHILIP, *King of Naples and Sicily, afterwards King of Spain.*
THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.
REGINALD POLE, *Cardinal and Papal Legate.*
SIMON RENARD, *Spanish Ambassador.*
LE SIEUR DE NOAILLES, *French Ambassador.*
THOMAS CRANMER, *Archbishop of Canterbury.*
SIR NICHOLAS HEATH, *Archbishop of York; Lord Chancellor after Gardiner.*
EDWARD COURTENAY, *Earl of Devon.*
LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, *afterwards Lord Howard, and Lord High Admiral.*
LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME.
LORD PAGET.
LORD PETRE.
STEPHEN GARDINER, *Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor.*
EDMUND BONNER, *Bishop of London.*
THOMAS THIRLBY, *Bishop of Ely.*
SIR THOMAS WYATT, SIR THOMAS STAFFORD } *Insurrectionary Leaders.*
SIR RALPH BAGENHALL.
SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.
SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.
SIR WILLIAM CECIL.
SIR THOMAS WHITE, *Lord Mayor of London.*

THE DUKE OF ALVA
THE COUNT DE FERIA } *attending on Philip.*
PETER MARTYR.
FATHER COLE.
FATHER BOURNE.
VILLA GARCIA.
SOTO.
CAPTAIN BRETT
ANTHONY KNYVETT } *Adherents of Wyatt.*
PETERS, *Gentleman of Lord Howard.*
ROGER, *Servant to Noailles.*
WILLIAM, *Servant to Wyatt.*
STEWARD OF HOUSEHOLD *to the Princess Elizabeth.*
OLD NOKES *and* NOKES.
MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, *Mother of Courtenay.*
LADY CLARENCE
LADY MAGDALEN DACRES } *Ladies in Waiting to the Queen.*
ALICE
MAID OF HONOUR *to the Princess Elizabeth.*
JOAN
TIB } *two Country Wives.*

Lords *and other* Attendants, Members *of the* Privy Council, Members *of* Parliament, Two Gentlemen, Aldermen, Citizens, Peasants, Ushers, Messengers, Guards, Pages, Gospellers, Marshalmen, *etc.*

QUEEN MARY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—ALDGATE RICHLY DECORATED.

CROWD. MARSHALMEN.

MARSHALMAN. Stand back, keep a clear lane! When will her Majesty pass, sayst thou? why now, even now; wherefore draw back your heads and your horns before I break them, and make what noise you will with your tongues, so it be not treason. Long live Queen Mary, the lawful and legitimate daughter of Harry the Eighth! Shout, knaves!

CITIZENS. Long live Queen Mary!

FIRST CITIZEN. That's a hard word, legitimate; what does it mean?

SECOND CITIZEN. It means a bastard.

THIRD CITIZEN. Nay, it means true-born.

FIRST CITIZEN. Why, didn't the Parliament make her a bastard?

SECOND CITIZEN. No; it was the Lady Elizabeth.

THIRD CITIZEN. That was after, man; that was after.

FIRST CITIZEN. Then which is the bastard?

SECOND CITIZEN. Troth, they be both bastards by Act of Parliament and Council.

THIRD CITIZEN. Ay, the Parliament can make every true-born man of us a bastard. Old Nokes, can't it make thee a bastard? thou shouldst know, for thou art as white as three Christmasses.

OLD NOKES (*dreamily*). Who's a-passing? King Edward or King Richard?

THIRD CITIZEN. No, old Nokes.

OLD NOKES. It's Harry!

THIRD CITIZEN. It's Queen Mary.

OLD NOKES. The blessed Mary's a-passing!

[*Falls on his knees.*

NOKES. Let father alone, my masters! he's past your questioning.

THIRD CITIZEN. Answer thou for him, then! thou'rt no such cockerel thyself, for thou was born i' the tail end of old Harry the Seventh.

NOKES. Eh! that was afore bastard-making began. I was born true man at five in the forenoon i' the tail of old Harry, and so they can't make me a bastard.

THIRD CITIZEN. But if Parliament can make the

Queen a bastard, why, it follows all the more that they can make thee one, who art fray'd i' the knees, and out at elbow, and bald o' the back, and bursten at the toes, and down at heels.

NOKES. I was born of a true man and a ring'd wife, and I can't argue upon it; but I and my old woman 'ud burn upon it, that would we.

MARSHALMAN. What are you cackling of bastardy under the Queen's own nose? I'll have you flogg'd and burnt too, by the Rood I will.

FIRST CITIZEN. He swears by the Rood. Whew!

SECOND CITIZEN. Hark! the trumpets.

[*The Procession passes,* MARY *and* ELIZABETH *riding side by side, and disappears under the gate.*

CITIZENS. Long live Queen Mary! down with all traitors! God save her Grace; and death to Northumberland! [*Exeunt.*

Manent TWO GENTLEMEN.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. By God's light a noble creature, right royal!

SECOND GENTLEMAN. She looks comelier than ordinary to-day; but to my mind the Lady Elizabeth is the more noble and royal.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. I mean the Lady Elizabeth. Did you hear (I have a daughter in her service who

reported it) that she met the Queen at Wanstead with five hundred horse, and the Queen (tho' some say they be much divided) took her hand, call'd her sweet sister, and kiss'd not her alone, but all the ladies of her following.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. Ay, that was in her hour of joy; there will be plenty to sunder and unsister them again: this Gardiner for one, who is to be made Lord Chancellor, and will pounce like a wild beast out of his cage to worry Cranmer.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. And furthermore, my daughter said that when there rose a talk of the late rebellion, she spoke even of Northumberland pitifully, and of the good Lady Jane as a poor innocent child who had but obeyed her father; and furthermore, she said that no one in her time should be burnt for heresy.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. Well, sir, I look for happy times.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. There is but one thing against them. I know not if you know.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. I suppose you touch upon the rumour that Charles, the master of the world, has offer'd her his son Philip, the Pope and the Devil. I trust it is but a rumour.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. She is going now to the Tower to loose the prisoners there, and among them Courte-

nay, to be made Earl of Devon, of royal blood, of splendid feature, whom the council and all her people wish her to marry. May it be so, for we are many of us Catholics, but few Papists, and the Hot Gospellers will go mad upon it.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. Was she not betroth'd in her babyhood to the Great Emperor himself?

FIRST GENTLEMAN. 'Ay, but he's too old.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. And again to her cousin Reginald Pole, now Cardinal; but I hear that he too is full of aches and broken before his day.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. O, the Pope could dispense with his Cardinalate, and his achage, and his breakage, if that were all: will you not follow the procession?

SECOND GENTLEMAN. No; I have seen enough for this day.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. Well, I shall follow; if I can get near enough I shall judge with my own eyes whether her Grace incline to this splendid scion of Plantagenet. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN LAMBETH PALACE.

CRANMER. To Strasburg, Antwerp, Frankfort,
Zurich, Worms,
Geneva, Basle — our Bishops from their sees

Or fled, they say, or flying—Poinet, Barlow,
Bale, Scory, Coverdale; besides the Deans
Of Christchurch, Durham, Exeter, and Wells—
Ailmer and Bullingham, and hundreds more;
So they report: I shall be left alone.
No: Hooper, Ridley, Latimer will not fly.

Enter PETER MARTYR.

PETER MARTYR. Fly, Cranmer! were there nothing else, your name
Stands first of those who sign'd the Letters Patent
That gave her royal crown to Lady Jane.

CRANMER. Stand first it may, but it was written last:
Those that are now her Privy Council, sign'd
Before me: nay, the Judges had pronounced
That our young Edward might bequeath the crown
Of England, putting by his father's will.
Yet I stood out, till Edward sent for me.
The wan boy-king, with his fast-fading eyes
Fixt hard on mine, his frail transparent hand,
Damp with the sweat of death, and griping mine,
Whisper'd me, if I loved him, not to yield
His Church of England to the Papal wolf
And Mary; then I could no more—I sign'd.
Nay, for bare shame of inconsistency,

She cannot pass her traitor council by,
To make me headless.

PETER MARTYR. That might be forgiven.
I tell you, fly, my Lord. You do not own
The bodily presence in the Eucharist,
Their wafer and perpetual sacrifice:
Your creed will be your death.

CRANMER. Step after step,
Thro' many voices crying right and left,
Have I climb'd back into the primal church,
And stand within the porch, and Christ with me:
My flight were such a scandal to the faith,
The downfall of so many simple souls,
I dare not leave my post.

PETER MARTYR. But you divorced
Queen Catharine and her father; hence, her hate
Will burn till you are burn'd.

CRANMER. I cannot help it.
The Canonists and Schoolmen were with me.
'Thou shalt not wed thy brother's wife,'—'Tis written,
'They shall be childless.' True, Mary was born,
But France would not accept her for a bride
As being born from incest; and this wrought
Upon the king; and child by child, you know,
Were momentary sparkles out as quick
Almost as kindled; and he brought his doubts
And fears to me. Peter, I'll swear for him

He *did* believe the bond incestuous.
But wherefore am I trenching on the time
That should already have seen your steps a mile
From me and Lambeth? God be with you! Go.

PETER MARTYR. Ah, but how fierce a letter you wrote against
Their superstition when they slander'd you
For setting up a mass at Canterbury
To please the Queen.

CRANMER. It was a wheedling monk
Set up the mass.

PETER MARTYR. I know it, my good Lord.
But you so bubbled over with hot terms
Of Satan, liars, blasphemy, Antichrist,
She never will forgive you. Fly, my Lord, fly!

CRANMER. I wrote it, and God grant me power to burn!

PETER MARTYR. They have given me a safe conduct: for all that
I dare not stay. I fear, I fear, I see you,
Dear friend, for the last time; farewell, and fly.

CRANMER. Fly and farewell, and let me die the death. [*Exit* PETER MARTYR.

Enter OLD SERVANT.

O, kind and gentle master, the Queen's Officers
Are here in force to take you to the Tower.

CRANMER. Ay, gentle friend, admit them. I will go.

I thank my God it is too late to fly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—ST. PAUL'S CROSS.

FATHER BOURNE *in the pulpit.* *A* CROWD. MARCHIONESS OF EXETER, COURTENAY. *The* SIEUR DE NOAILLES *and his man* ROGER *in front of the stage.* *Hubbub.*

NOAILLES. Hast thou let fall those papers in the palace?

ROGER. Ay, sir.

NOAILLES. 'There will be no peace for Mary till Elizabeth lose her head.'

ROGER. Ay, sir.

NOAILLES. And the other, 'Long live Elizabeth the Queen!'

ROGER. Ay, sir; she needs must tread upon them.

NOAILLES. Well.

These beastly swine make such a grunting here,

I cannot catch what Father Bourne is saying.

ROGER. Quiet a moment, my masters; hear what the shaveling has to say for himself.

CROWD. Hush—hear!

BOURNE. —and so this unhappy land, long divided

in itself, and sever'd from the faith, will return into the one true fold, seeing that our gracious Virgin Queen hath——

CROWD. No pope! no pope!

ROGER (*to those about him, mimicking* BOURNE). —hath sent for the holy legate of the holy father the Pope, Cardinal Pole, to give us all that holy absolution which—

FIRST CITIZEN. Old Bourne to the life!

SECOND CITIZEN. Holy absolution! holy Inquisition!

THIRD CITIZEN. Down with the Papist!

[*Hubbub.*

BOURNE. —and now that your good bishop, Bonner, who hath lain so long under bonds for the faith— [*Hubbub.*

NOAILLES. Friend Roger, steal thou in among the crowd,
And get the swine to shout Elizabeth.
Yon gray old Gospeller, sour as midwinter,
Begin with him.

ROGER (*goes*). By the mass, old friend, we'll have no pope here while the Lady Elizabeth lives.

GOSPELLER. Art thou of the true faith, fellow, that swearest by the mass?

ROGER. Ay, that am I, new converted, but the old leaven sticks to my tongue yet.

FIRST CITIZEN. He says right; by the mass we'll have no mass here.

VOICES OF THE CROWD. Peace! hear him; let his own words damn the Papist. From thine own mouth I judge thee—tear him down!

BOURNE. —and since our Gracious Queen, let me call her our second Virgin Mary, hath begun to re-edify the true temple——

FIRST CITIZEN. Virgin Mary! we'll have no virgins here—we'll have the Lady Elizabeth!

[*Swords are drawn, a knife is hurled and sticks in the pulpit. The mob throng to the pulpit stairs.*

MARCHIONESS OF EXETER. Son Courtenay, wilt thou see the holy father
Murdered before thy face? up, son, and save him!
They love thee, and thou canst not come to harm.

COURTENAY (*in the pulpit*). Shame, shame, my masters! are you English-born,
And set yourselves by hundreds against one?

CROWD. A Courtenay! a Courtenay!

[*A train of Spanish servants crosses at the back of the stage.*

NOAILLES. These birds of passage come before their time:
Stave off the crowd upon the Spaniard there.

ROGER. My masters, yonder's fatter game for you
Than this old gaping gurgoyle: look you there—

The Prince of Spain coming to wed our Queen!
After him boys! and pelt him from the city.

[*They seize stones and follow the Spaniards. Exeunt on the other side* MARCHIONESS OF EXETER *and* ATTENDANTS.

NOAILLES (*to* ROGER). Stand from me. If Elizabeth lose her head—
That makes for France.
And if her people, anger'd thereupon,
Arise against her and dethrone the Queen—
That makes for France.
And if I breed confusion anyway—
That makes for France.
Good-day, my Lord of Devon;
A bold heart yours to beard that raging mob!

COURTENAY. My mother said, Go up; and up I went.
I knew they would not do me any wrong,
For I am mighty popular with them, Noailles.

NOAILLES. You look'd a king.

COURTENAY. Why not? I am king's blood.

NOAILLES. And in the whirl of change may come to be one.

COURTENAY. Ah!

NOAILLES. But does your gracious Queen entreat you kinglike?

COURTENAY. 'Fore God, I think she entreats me like a child.

NOAILLES. You've but a dull life in this maiden court,
I fear, my Lord?

COURTENAY. A life of nods and yawns.

NOAILLES. So you would honour my poor house to-night,
We might enliven you. Divers honest fellows,
The Duke of Suffolk lately freed from prison,
Sir Peter Carew and Sir Thomas Wyatt,
Sir Thomas Stafford, and some more—we play.

COURTENAY. At what?

NOAILLES. The Game of Chess.

COURTENAY. The Game of Chess!
I can play well, and I shall beat you there.

NOAILLES. Ay, but we play with Henry, King of France,
And certain of his court.
His Highness makes his moves across the Channel,
We answer him with ours, and there are messengers
That go between us.

COURTENAY. Why, such a game, sir, were whole years a playing.

NOAILLES. Nay; not so long I trust. That all depends
Upon the skill and swiftness of the players.

COURTENAY. The King is skilful at it?

NOAILLES. Very, my Lord.

COURTENAY. And the stakes high?

NOAILLES. But not beyond your means.

COURTENAY. Well, I'm the first of players. I shall win.

NOAILLES. With our advice and in our company,
And so you well attend to the king's moves,
I think you may.

COURTENAY. When do you meet?

NOAILLES. To-night.

COURTENAY (*aside*). I will be there; the fellow's at his tricks—
Deep—I shall fathom him. (*Aloud.*) Good morning, Noailles. [*Exit* COURTENAY.

NOAILLES. Good-day, my Lord. Strange game of chess! a King
That with her own pawns plays against a Queen,
Whose play is all to find herself a King.
Ay; but this fine blue-blooded Courtenay seems
Too princely for a pawn. Call him a Knight,
That, with an ass's, not a horse's head,
Skips every way, from levity or from fear.
Well, we shall use him somehow, so that Gardiner
And Simon Renard spy not out our game
Too early. Roger, thinkest thou that anyone
Suspected thee to be my man?

ROGER. Not one, sir.

NOAILLES. No! the disguise was perfect. Let's away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

ELIZABETH. *Enter* COURTENAY.

COURTENAY. So yet am I,
Unless my friends and mirrors lie to me,
A goodlier-looking fellow than this Philip.
Pah!
The Queen is ill advised: shall I turn traitor?
They've almost talked me into it: yet the word
Affrights me somewhat: to be such a one
As Harry Bolingbroke hath a lure in it.
Good now, my Lady Queen, tho' by your age,
And by your looks you are not worth the having,
Yet by your crown you are. [*Seeing* ELIZABETH.
The Princess there?
If I tried her and la—she's amorous.
Have we not heard of her in Edward's time,
Her freaks and frolics with the late Lord Admiral?
I do believe she'd yield. I should be still
A party in the state; and then, who knows—

ELIZABETH. What are you musing on, my Lord of Devon?

COURTENAY. Has not the Queen—

ELIZABETH. Done what, Sir?

COURTENAY. —made you follow
The Lady Suffolk and the Lady Lennox?—

You,
The heir presumptive.

ELIZABETH. Why do you ask? you know it.

COURTENAY. You needs must bear it hardly.

ELIZABETH. No, indeed!
I am utterly submissive to the Queen.

COURTENAY. Well, I was musing upon that; the Queen
Is both my foe and yours: we should be friends.

ELIZABETH. My Lord, the hatred of another to us
Is no true bond of friendship.

COURTENAY. Might it not
Be the rough preface of some closer bond?

ELIZABETH. My Lord, you late were loosed from out the Tower,
Where, like a butterfly in a chrysalis,
You spent your life; that broken, out you flutter
Thro' the new world, go zigzag, now would settle
Upon this flower, now that; but all things here
At court are known; you have solicited
The Queen, and been rejected.

COURTENAY. Flower, she!
Half faded! but you, cousin, are fresh and sweet
As the first flower no bee has ever tried.

ELIZABETH. Are you the bee to try me? why, but now
I called you butterfly.

COURTENAY. You did me wrong,
I love not to be called a butterfly:
Why do you call me butterfly?

ELIZABETH. Why do you go so gay then?

COURTENAY. Velvet and gold.
This dress was made me as the Earl of Devon
To take my seat in; looks it not right royal?

ELIZABETH. So royal that the Queen forbad you wearing it.

COURTENAY. I wear it then to spite her.

ELIZABETH. My Lord, my Lord;
I see you in the Tower again. Her Majesty
Hears you affect the Prince—prelates kneel to you.—

COURTENAY. I am the noblest blood in Europe, Madam,
A Courtenay of Devon, and her cousin.

ELIZABETH. She hears you make your boast that after all
She means to wed you. Folly, my good Lord.

COURTENAY. How folly? a great party in the state
Wills me to wed her.

ELIZABETH. Failing her, my Lord,
Doth not as great a party in the state
Will you to wed me?

COURTENAY. Even so, fair lady.

ELIZABETH. You know to flatter ladies.

COURTENAY. Nay, I meant
True matters of the heart.
ELIZABETH. *My* heart, my Lord,
Is no great party in the state as yet.
COURTENAY. Great, said you? nay, you shall be great. I love you,
Lay my life in your hands. Can you be close?
ELIZABETH. Can you, my Lord?
COURTENAY. Close as a miser's casket.
Listen:
The King of France, Noailles the Ambassador,
The Duke of Suffolk and Sir Peter Carew,
Sir Thomas Wyatt, I myself, some others,
Have sworn this Spanish marriage shall not be.
If Mary will not hear us—well—conjecture—
Were I in Devon with my wedded bride,
The people there so worship me—Your ear;
You shall be Queen.
ELIZABETH. You speak too low, my Lord;
I cannot hear you.
COURTENAY. I'll repeat it.
ELIZABETH. No!
Stand further off, or you may lose your head.
COURTENAY. I have a head to lose for your sweet sake.
ELIZABETH. Have you, my Lord? Best keep it for your own.

Nay, pout not, cousin.
Not many friends are mine, except indeed
Among the many. I believe you mine;
And so you may continue mine, farewell,
And that at once.

Enter MARY, *behind.*

MARY. Whispering—leagued together
To bar me from my Philip.

COURTENAY. Pray—consider—

ELIZABETH (*seeing the* QUEEN). Well, that's a noble horse of yours, my Lord.
I trust that he will carry you well to-day,
And heal your headache.

COURTENAY. You are wild; what headache?
Heartache, perchance; not headache.

ELIZABETH (*aside to* COURTENAY). Are you blind?

[COURTENAY *sees the* QUEEN *and exit.* *Exit* MARY.

Enter LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

HOWARD. Was that my Lord of Devon? do not you
Be seen in corners with my Lord of Devon.
He hath fallen out of favour with the Queen.
She fears the Lords may side with you and him
Against her marriage; therefore is he dangerous.

And if this Prince of fluff and feather come
To woo you, niece, he is dangerous everyway.

ELIZABETH. Not very dangerous that way, my good uncle.

HOWARD. But your own state is full of danger here.

The disaffected, heretics, reformers,
Look to you as the one to crown their ends.
Mix not yourself with any plot I pray you;
Nay, if by chance you hear of any such,
Speak not thereof—no, not to your best friend,
Lest you should be confounded with it. Still—
Perinde ac cadaver—as the priest says,
You know your Latin—quiet as a dead body.
What was my Lord of Devon telling you?

ELIZABETH. Whether he told me anything or not,
I follow your good counsel, gracious uncle.
Quiet as a dead body.

HOWARD. You do right well.
I do not care to know; but this I charge you,
Tell Courtenay nothing. The Lord Chancellor
(I count it as a kind of virtue in him,
He hath not many), as a mastiff dog
May love a puppy cur for no more reason
Than that the twain have been tied up together,
Thus Gardiner—for the two were fellow-prisoners
So many years in yon accursed Tower—

Hath taken to this Courtenay. Look to it, niece,
He hath no fence when Gardiner questions him;
All oozes out: yet him—because they know him
The last White Rose, the last Plantagenet
(Nay, there is Cardinal Pole, too), the people
Claim as their natural leader—ay, some say,
That you shall marry him, make him King belike.

ELIZABETH. Do they say so, good uncle?

HOWARD. Ay, good niece!
You should be plain and open with me, niece.
You should not play upon me.

ELIZABETH. No, good uncle.

Enter GARDINER.

GARDINER. The Queen would see your Grace upon the moment.

ELIZABETH. Why, my lord Bishop?

GARDINER. I think she means to counsel your withdrawing
To Ashridge, or some other country house.

ELIZABETH. Why, my lord Bishop?

GARDINER. I do but bring the message, know no more.
Your Grace will hear her reasons from herself.

ELIZABETH. 'Tis mine own wish fulfill'd before the word

Was spoken, for in truth I had meant to crave
Permission of her Highness to retire
To Ashridge, and pursue my studies there.

GARDINER. Madam, to have the wish before the word
Is man's good Fairy—and the Queen is yours.
I left her with rich jewels in her hand,
Whereof 'tis like enough she means to make
A farewell present to your Grace.

ELIZABETH. My Lord,
I have the jewel of a loyal heart.

GARDINER. I doubt it not, Madam, most loyal.

[*Bows low and exit.*

HOWARD. See,
This comes of parleying with my Lord of Devon.
Well, well, you must obey; and I myself
Believe it will be better for your welfare.
Your time will come.

ELIZABETH. I think my time will come.
Uncle,
I am of sovereign nature, that I know,
Not to be quell'd; and I have felt within me
Stirrings of some great doom when God's just hour
Peals—but this fierce old Gardiner—his big baldness,
That irritable forelock which he rubs,
His buzzard beak and deep-incavern'd eyes
Half fright me.

HOWARD. You've a bold heart; keep it so.

He cannot touch you save that you turn traitor;
And so take heed I pray you—you are one
Who love that men should smile upon you, niece.
They'd smile you into treason—some of them.

ELIZABETH. I spy the rock beneath the smiling sea.
But if this Philip, the proud Catholic prince,
And this bald priest, and she that hates me, seek
In that lone house, to practise on my life,
By poison, fire, shot, stab—

HOWARD. They will not, niece.
Mine is the fleet and all the power at sea—
Or will be in a moment. If they dared
To harm you, I would blow this Philip and all
Your trouble to the dogstar and the devil.

ELIZABETH. To the Pleiads, uncle; they have lost a sister.

HOWARD. But why say that? what have you done to lose her?
Come, come, I will go with you to the Queen.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY *with* PHILIP'S *miniature*. ALICE.

MARY (*kissing the miniature*). Most goodly, King-like and an Emperor's son,—
A king to be,—is he not noble, girl?

ALICE. Goodly enough, your Grace, and yet, methinks,
I have seen goodlier.
MARY. Ay; some waxen doll
Thy baby eyes have rested on, belike;
All red and white, the fashion of our land.
But my good mother came (God rest her soul)
Of Spain, and I am Spanish in myself,
And in my likings.
ALICE. By your Grace's leave
Your royal mother came of Spain, but took
To the English red and white. Your royal father
(For so they say) was all pure lily and rose
In his youth, and like a lady.
MARY. O, just God!
Sweet mother, you had time and cause enough
To sicken of his lilies and his roses.
Cast off, betray'd, defamed, divorced, forlorn!
And then the King—that traitor past forgiveness,
The false archbishop fawning on him, married
The mother of Elizabeth—a heretic
Ev'n as *she* is; but God hath sent me here
To take such order with all heretics
That it shall be, before I die, as tho'
My father and my brother had not lived.
What wast thou saying of this Lady Jane,
Now in the Tower?

ALICE. Why, Madam, she was passing
Some chapel down in Essex, and with her
Lady Anne Wharton, and the Lady Anne
Bow'd to the Pyx; but Lady Jane stood up
Stiff as the very backbone of heresy.
And wherefore bow ye not, says Lady Anne,
To him within there who made Heaven and Earth?
I cannot, and I dare not, tell your Grace
What Lady Jane replied.

MARY. But I will have it.

ALICE. She said—pray pardon me, and pity her—
She hath harken'd evil counsel—ah! she said,
The baker made him.

MARY. Monstrous! blasphemous!
She ought to burn. Hence, thou (*Exit* ALICE). No
—being traitor
Her head will fall: shall it? she is but a child.
We do not kill the child for doing that
His father whipt him into doing—a head
So full of grace and beauty! would that mine
Were half as gracious! O, my lord to be,
My love, for thy sake only.
I am eleven years older than he is.
But will he care for that?
No, by the holy Virgin, being noble,
But love me only: then the bastard sprout,
My sister, is far fairer than myself.

Will he be drawn to her?
No, being of the true faith with myself.
Paget is for him—for to wed with Spain
Would treble England—Gardiner is against him;
The Council, people, Parliament against him;
But I will have him! My hard father hated me;
My brother rather hated me than loved;
My sister cowers and hates me. Holy Virgin,
Plead with thy blessed Son; grant me my prayer:
Give me my Philip; and we two will lead
The living waters of the Faith again
Back thro' their widow'd channel here, and watch
The parch'd banks rolling incense, as of old,
To heaven, and kindled with the palms of Christ!

Enter USHER.

Who waits, sir?

USHER. Madam, the Lord Chancellor.

MARY. Bid him come in. (*Enter* GARDINER.)
Good morning, my good Lord. [*Exit* USHER.

GARDINER. That every morning of your Majesty
May be most good, is every morning's prayer
Of your most loyal subject, Stephen Gardiner.

MARY. Come you to tell me this, my Lord?

GARDINER. And more.
Your people have begun to learn your worth.
Your pious wish to pay King Edward's debts,

Your lavish household curb'd, and the remission
Of half that subsidy levied on the people,
Make all tongues praise and all hearts beat for you.
I'd have you yet more loved: the realm is poor,
The exchequer at neap-tide: we might withdraw
Part of our garrison at Calais.

MARY. Calais!
Our one point on the main, the gate of France!
I am Queen of England; take mine eyes, mine heart,
But do not lose me Calais.

GARDINER. Do not fear it.
Of that hereafter. I say your Grace is loved.
That I may keep you thus, who am your friend
And ever faithful counsellor, might I speak?

MARY. I can forespeak your speaking. Would I marry
Prince Philip, if all England hate him? That is
Your question, and I front it with another:
Is it England, or a party? Now, your answer.

GARDINER. My answer is, I wear beneath my dress
A shirt of mail: my house hath been assaulted,
And when I walk abroad, the populace,
With fingers pointed like so many daggers,
Stab me in fancy, hissing Spain and Philip;
And when I sleep, a hundred men-at-arms

Guard my poor dreams for England. Men would
murder me,
Because they think me favourer of this marriage.

MARY. And that were hard upon you, my Lord
Chancellor.

GARDINER. But our young Earl of Devon—

MARY. Earl of Devon?
I freed him from the Tower, placed him at
Court;
I made him Earl of Devon, and—the fool—
He wrecks his health and wealth on courtesans,
And rolls himself in carrion like a dog.

GARDINER. More like a school-boy that hath
broken bounds,
Sickening himself with sweets.

MARY. I will not hear of him.
Good, then, they will revolt: but I am Tudor,
And shall control them.

GARDINER. I will help you, Madam,
Even to the utmost. All the church is grateful.
You have ousted the mock priest, repulpited
The shepherd of St. Peter, raised the rood again,
And brought us back the mass. I am all thanks
To God and to your Grace: yet I know well,
Your people, and I go with them so far,
Will brook nor Pope nor Spaniard here to play
The tyrant, or in commonwealth or church.

MARY (*showing the picture*). Is this the face of one who plays the tyrant?
Peruse it; is it not goodly, ay, and gentle?

GARDINER. Madam, methinks a cold face and a haughty.
And when your Highness talks of Courtenay—
Ay, true—a goodly one. I would his life
Were half as goodly (*aside*).

MARY. What is that you mutter?

GARDINER. Oh, Madam, take it bluntly; marry Philip,
And be stepmother of a score of sons!
The prince is known in Spain, in Flanders, ha!
For Philip—

MARY. You offend us; you may leave us.
You see thro' warping glasses.

GARDINER. If your Majesty—

MARY. I have sworn upon the body and blood of Christ
I'll none but Philip.

GARDINER. Hath your Grace so sworn?

MARY. Ay, Simon Renard knows it.

GARDINER. News to me!
It then remains for your poor Gardiner,
So you still care to trust him somewhat less
Than Simon Renard, to compose the event
In some such form as least may harm your Grace.

MARY. I'll have the scandal sounded to the mud.
I know it a scandal.

GARDINER. All my hope is now
It may be found a scandal.

MARY. You offend us.

GARDINER (*aside*). These princes are like children, must be physick'd,
The bitter in the sweet. I have lost mine office,
It may be, thro' mine honesty, like a fool.

[*Exit.*

Enter USHER.

MARY. Who waits?

USHER. The Ambassador from France, your Grace.

MARY (*sits down*). Bid him come in. Good morning, Sir de Noailles.

[*Exit* USHER.

NOAILLES (*entering*). A happy morning to your Majesty.

MARY. And I should some time have a happy morning;
I have had none yet. What says the King your master?

NOAILLES. Madam, my master hears with much alarm,
That you may marry Philip, Prince of Spain—
Foreseeing, with whate'er unwillingness,

That if this Philip be the titular king
Of England, and at war with him, your Grace
And kingdom will be suck'd into the war,
Ay, tho' you long for peace; wherefore, my master,
If but to prove your Majesty's goodwill,
Would fain have some fresh treaty drawn between you.

MARY. Why some fresh treaty? wherefore should I do it?
Sir, if we marry, we shall still maintain
All former treaties with his Majesty.
Our royal word for that! and your good master,
Pray God he do not be the first to break them,
Must be content with that; and so, farewell.

NOAILLES (*going, returns*). I would your answer had been other, Madam,
For I foresee dark days.

MARY. And so do I, sir;
Your master works against me in the dark.
I do believe he holp Northumberland
Against me.

NOAILLES. Nay, pure phantasy, your Grace.
Why should he move against you?

MARY. Will you hear why?
Mary of Scotland,—for I have not own'd
My sister, and I will not,—after me
Is heir of England; and my royal father,
To make the crown of Scotland one with ours,

Had mark'd her for my brother Edward's bride;
Ay, but your king stole her a babe from Scotland
In order to betroth her to your Dauphin.
See then:
Mary of Scotland, married to your Dauphin,
Would make our England, France;
Mary of England, joining hands with Spain,
Would be too strong for France.
Yea, were there issue born to her, Spain and we,
One crown, might rule the world. There lies your fear.
That is your drift. You play at hide and seek.
Show me your faces!

NOAILLES. Madam, I am amazed:
French, I must needs wish all good things for France.
That must be pardon'd me; but I protest
Your Grace's policy hath a farther flight
Than mine into the future. We but seek
Some settled ground for peace to stand upon.

MARY. Well, we will leave all this, sir, to our council.
Have you seen Philip ever?

NOAILLES. Only once.

MARY. Is this like Philip?

NOAILLES. Ay, but nobler-looking.

MARY. Hath he the large ability of the Emperor?

NOAILLES. No, surely.

MARY. I can make allowance for thee,
Thou speakest of the enemy of thy king.

NOAILLES. Make no allowance for the naked truth.
He is every way a lesser man than Charles;
Stone-hard, ice-cold—no dash of daring in him.

MARY. If cold, his life is pure.

NOAILLES. Why (*smiling*), no, indeed.

MARY. Sayst thou?

NOAILLES. A very wanton life indeed (*smiling*).

MARY. Your audience is concluded, sir.

[*Exit* NOAILLES.

You cannot
Learn a man's nature from his natural foe.

Enter USHER.

Who waits?

USHER. The Ambassador of Spain, your Grace.

[*Exit.*

Enter SIMON RENARD.

MARY (*rising to meet him*). Thou art ever welcome,
Simon Renard. Hast thou
Brought me the letter which thine Emperor promised
Long since, a formal offer of the hand
Of Philip?

RENARD. Nay, your Grace, it hath not reach'd me.
I know not wherefore—some mischance of flood,
And broken bridge, or spavin'd horse, or wave
And wind at their old battle: he must have written.

MARY. But Philip never writes me one poor word,
Which in his absence had been all my wealth.
Strange in a wooer!

RENARD. Yet I know the Prince,
So your king-parliament suffer him to land,
Yearns to set foot upon your island shore.

MARY. God change the pebble which his kingly foot
First presses into some more costly stone
Than ever blinded eye. I'll have one mark it
And bring it me. I'll have it burnish'd firelike;
I'll set it round with gold, with pearl, with diamond.
Let the great angel of the church come with him;
Stand on the deck and spread his wings for sail!
God lay the waves and strow the storms at sea,
And here at land among the people! O Renard,
I am much beset, I am almost in despair.
Paget is ours. Gardiner perchance is ours;
But for our heretic Parliament—

RENARD. O Madam,
You fly your thoughts like kites. My master, Charles,
Bad you go softly with your heretics here,
Until your throne had ceased to tremble. Then
Spit them like larks for aught I care. Besides,
When Henry broke the carcase of your church
To pieces, there were many wolves among you
Who dragg'd the scatter'd limbs into their den.

The Pope would have you make them render these;
So would your Cousin, Cardinal Pole; ill counsel!
These let them keep at present; stir not yet
This matter of the Church lands. At his coming
Your star will rise.

MARY. My star! a baleful one.
I see but the black night, and hear the wolf.
What star?

RENARD. Your star will be your princely son,
Heir of this England and the Netherlands!
And if your wolf the while should howl for more,
We'll dust him from a bag of Spanish gold.
I do believe, I have dusted some already,
That, soon or late, your Parliament is ours.

MARY. Why do they talk so foully of your Prince,
Renard?

RENARD. The lot of Princes. To sit high
Is to be lied about.

MARY. They call him cold,
Haughty, ay, worse.

RENARD. Why, doubtless, Philip shows
Some of the bearing of your blue blood—still
All within measure—nay, it well becomes him.

MARY. Hath he the large ability of his father?

RENARD. Nay, some believe that he will go beyond him.

MARY. Is this like him?

RENARD. Ay, somewhat; but your Philip
Is the most princelike Prince beneath the sun.
This is a daub to Philip.

MARY. Of a pure life?

RENARD. As an angel among angels. Yea, by Heaven,
The text—Your Highness knows it, 'Whosoever
Looketh after a woman,' would not graze
The Prince of Spain. You are happy in him there,
Chaste as your Grace!

MARY. I am happy in him there.

RENARD. And would be altogether happy, Madam,
So that your sister were but look'd to closer.
You have sent her from the court, but then she goes,
I warrant, not to hear the nightingales,
But hatch you some new treason in the woods.

MARY. We have our spies abroad to catch her tripping,
And then if caught, to the Tower.

RENARD. The Tower! the block!
The word has turn'd your Highness pale; the thing
Was no such scarecrow in your father's time.
I have heard, the tongue yet quiver'd with the jest
When the head leapt—so common! I do think
To save your crown that it must come to this.

MARY. No, Renard; it must never come to this.

RENARD. Not yet; but your old Traitors of the Tower—
Why, when you put Northumberland to death,
The sentence having past upon them all,
Spared you the Duke of Suffolk, Guildford Dudley,
Ev'n that young girl who dared to wear your crown?
MARY. Dared? nay, not so; the child obey'd her father.
Spite of her tears her father forced it on her.
RENARD. Good Madam, when the Roman wish'd to reign,
He slew not him alone who wore the purple,
But his assessor in the throne, perchance
A child more innocent than Lady Jane.
MARY. I am English Queen, not Roman Emperor.
RENARD. Yet too much mercy is a want of mercy,
And wastes more life. Stamp out the fire, or this
Will smoulder and re-flame, and burn the throne
Where you should sit with Philip: he will not come
Till she be gone.
MARY. Indeed, if that were true—
For Philip comes, one hand in mine, and one
Steadying the tremulous pillars of the Church—
But no, no, no. Farewell. I am somewhat faint
With our long talk. Tho' Queen, I am not Queen
Of mine own heart, which every now and then
Beats me half dead: yet stay, this golden chain—

My father on a birthday gave it me,
And I have broken with my father—take
And wear it as memorial of a morning
Which found me full of foolish doubts, and leaves me
As hopeful.

RENARD (*aside*). Whew—the folly of all follies
Is to be love-sick for a shadow. (*Aloud*) Madam,
This chains me to your service, not with gold,
But dearest links of love. Farewell, and trust me,
Philip is yours. [*Exit.*

MARY. Mine—but not yet all mine.

Enter USHER.

USHER. Your Council is in Session, please your Majesty.

MARY. Sir, let them sit. I must have time to breathe.
No, say I come. (*Exit* USHER.) I won by boldness once.
The Emperor counsell'd me to fly to Flanders.
I would not; but a hundred miles I rode,
Sent out my letters, call'd my friends together,
Struck home and won.
And when the Council would not crown me—thought
To bind me first by oaths I could not keep,

And keep with Christ and conscience—was it boldness
Or weakness that won there? when I, their Queen,
Cast myself down upon my knees before them,
And those hard men brake into woman-tears,
Ev'n Gardiner, all amazed, and in that passion
Gave me my Crown.

Enter ALICE.

Girl; hast thou ever heard
Slanders against Prince Philip in our Court?

ALICE. What slanders? I, your Grace; no, never.

MARY. Nothing?

ALICE. Never, your Grace.

MARY. See that you neither hear them nor repeat!

ALICE (*aside*). Good Lord! but I have heard a thousand such.

Ay, and repeated them as often—mum!
Why comes that old fox-Fleming back again?

Enter RENARD.

RENARD. Madam, I scarce had left your Grace's presence
Before I chanced upon the messenger
Who brings that letter which we waited for—

The formal offer of Prince Philip's hand.
It craves an instant answer, Ay or No.

MARY. An instant Ay or No! the Council sits.
Give it me quick.

ALICE (*stepping before her*). Your Highness is all trembling.

MARY. Make way. [*Exit into the Council Chamber.*

ALICE. O Master Renard, Master Renard,
If you have falsely painted your fine Prince;
Praised, where you should have blamed him, I pray God
No woman ever love you, Master Renard.
It breaks my heart to hear her moan at night
As tho' the nightmare never left her bed.

RENARD. My pretty maiden, tell me, did you ever
Sigh for a beard?

ALICE. That's not a pretty question.

RENARD. Not prettily put? I mean, my pretty maiden,
A pretty man for such a pretty maiden.

ALICE. My Lord of Devon is a pretty man.
I hate him. Well, but if I have, what then?

RENARD. Then, pretty maiden, you should know that whether
A wind be warm or cold, it serves to fan
A kindled fire.

ALICE. According to the song.

His friends would praise him, I believed 'em,
His foes would blame him, and I scorn'd 'em,
His friends—as Angels I received 'em,
His foes—the Devil had suborn'd 'em.

RENARD. Peace, pretty maiden.
I hear them stirring in the Council Chamber.
Lord Paget's 'Ay' is sure—who else? and yet,
They are all too much at odds to close at once
In one full-throated No! Her Highness comes.

Enter MARY.

ALICE. How deathly pale!—a chair, your Highness. [*Bringing one to the* QUEEN.

RENARD. Madam,
The Council?

MARY. Ay! My Philip is all mine.
[*Sinks into chair, half fainting.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—ALINGTON CASTLE.

SIR THOMAS WYATT. I do not hear from Carew or the Duke
Of Suffolk, and till then I should not move.
The Duke hath gone to Leicester; Carew stirs
In Devon: that fine porcelain Courtenay,
Save that he fears he might be crack'd in using,
(I have known a semi-madman in my time
So fancy-ridd'n) should be in Devon too.

Enter WILLIAM.

News abroad, William?

WILLIAM. None so new, Sir Thomas, and none so old, Sir Thomas. No new news that Philip comes to wed Mary, no old news that all men hate it. Old Sir Thomas would have hated it. The bells are ringing at Maidstone. Doesn't your worship hear?

WYATT. Ay, for the Saints are come to reign again.
Most like it is a Saint's-day. There's no call
As yet for me; so in this pause, before
The mine be fired, it were a pious work
To string my father's sonnets, left about
Like loosely-scatter'd jewels, in fair order,
And head them with a lamer rhyme of mine,
To grace his memory.

WILLIAM. Ay, why not, Sir Thomas? He was a fine courtier, he; Queen Anne loved him. All the women loved him. I loved him, I was in Spain with him. I couldn't eat in Spain, I couldn't sleep in Spain. I hate Spain, Sir Thomas.

WYATT. But thou could'st drink in Spain if I remember.

WILLIAM. Sir Thomas, we may grant the wine. Old Sir Thomas always granted the wine.

WYATT. Hand me the casket with my father's sonnets.

WILLIAM. Ay—sonnets—a fine courtier of the old Court, old Sir Thomas. [*Exit.*

WYATT. Courtier of many courts, he loved the more
His own gray towers, plain life and letter'd peace,
To read and rhyme in solitary fields,
The lark above, the nightingale below,
And answer them in song. The sire begets

Not half his likeness in the son. I fail
Where he was fullest: yet—to write it down.

[*He writes.*

Re-enter WILLIAM.

WILLIAM. There *is* news, there *is* news, and no call for sonnet-sorting now, nor for sonnet-making either, but ten thousand men on Penenden Heath all calling after your worship, and your worship's name heard into Maidstone market, and your worship the first man in Kent and Christendom, for the Queen's down, and the world's up, and your worship a-top of it.

WYATT. Inverted Æsop—mountain out of mouse.
Say for ten thousand ten—and pothouse knaves,
Brain-dizzied with a draught of morning ale.

Enter ANTONY KNYVETT.

WILLIAM. Here's Antony Knyvett.

KNYVETT. Look you, Master Wyatt,
Tear up that woman's work there.

WYATT. No; not these,
Dumb children of my father, that will speak
When I and thou and all rebellions lie
Dead bodies without voice. Song flies you know
For ages.

KNYVETT. Tut, your sonnet's a flying ant,
Wing'd for a moment.

WYATT. Well, for mine own work,

[*Tearing the paper.*

It lies there in six pieces at your feet;
For all that I can carry it in my head.

KNYVETT. If you can carry your head upon your shoulders.

WYATT. I fear you come to carry it off my shoulders,
And sonnet-making's safer.

KNYVETT. Why, good Lord,
Write you as many sonnets as you will.
Ay, but not now; what, have you eyes, ears, brains?
This Philip and the black-faced swarms of Spain,
The hardest, cruellest people in the world,
Come locusting upon us, eat us up,
Confiscate lands, goods, money—Wyatt, Wyatt,
Wake, or the stout old island will become
A rotten limb of Spain. They roar for you
On Penenden Heath, a thousand of them—more—
All arm'd, waiting a leader; there's no glory
Like his who saves his country: and you sit
Sing-songing here; but, if I'm any judge,
By God, you are as poor a poet, Wyatt,
As a good soldier.

WYATT. You as poor a critic
As an honest friend: you stroke me on one cheek,
Buffet the other. Come, you bluster, Antony!

You know I know all this. I must not move
Until I hear from Carew and the Duke.
I fear the mine is fired before the time.

KNYVETT (*showing a paper*). But here's some Hebrew. Faith, I half forgot it.
Look; can you make it English? A strange youth
Suddenly thrust it on me, whisper'd, 'Wyatt,'
And whisking round a corner, show'd his back
Before I read his face.

WYATT. Ha! Courtenay's cipher. [*Reads.*

'Sir Peter Carew fled to France: it is thought the Duke will be taken. I am with you still; but, for appearance sake, stay with the Queen. Gardiner knows, but the Council are all at odds, and the Queen hath no force for resistance. Move, if you move, at once.'

Is Peter Carew fled? Is the Duke taken?
Down scabbard, and out sword! and let Rebellion
Roar till throne rock, and crown fall. No; not that;
But we will teach Queen Mary how to reign.
Who are those that shout below there?

KNYVETT. Why, some fifty
That follow'd me from Penenden Heath in hope
To hear you speak.

WYATT. Open the window, Knyvett;
The mine is fired, and I will speak to them.

Men of Kent; England of England; you that have kept your old customs upright, while all the rest of England bow'd theirs to the Norman, the cause that hath brought us together is not the cause of a county or a shire, but of this England, in whose crown our Kent is the fairest jewel. Philip shall not wed Mary; and ye have called me to be your leader. I know Spain. I have been there with my father; I have seen them in their own land; have marked the haughtiness of their nobles; the cruelty of their priests. If this man marry our Queen, however the Council and the Commons may fence round his power with restriction, he will be King, King of England, my masters; and the Queen, and the laws, and the people, his slaves. What? shall we have Spain on the throne and in the parliament; Spain in the pulpit and on the law-bench; Spain in all the great offices of state; Spain in our ships, in our forts, in our houses, in our beds?

CROWD. No! no! no Spain!

WILLIAM. No Spain in our beds—that were worse than all. I have been there with old Sir Thomas, and the beds I know. I hate Spain.

A PEASANT. But, Sir Thomas, must we levy war against the Queen's Grace?

WYATT. No, my friend; war *for* the Queen's Grace —to save her from herself and Philip—war against

Spain. And think not we shall be alone—thousands will flock to us. The Council, the Court itself, is on our side. The Lord Chancellor himself is on our side. The King of France is with us; the King of Denmark is with us; the world is with us—war against Spain! And if we move not now, yet it will be known that we have moved; and if Philip come to be King, O, my God! the rope, the rack, the thumbscrew, the stake, the fire. If we move not now, Spain moves, bribes our nobles with her gold, and creeps, creeps snake-like about our legs till we cannot move at all; and ye know, my masters, that wherever Spain hath ruled she hath wither'd all beneath her. Look at the New World—a paradise made hell; the red man, that good helpless creature, starved, maim'd, flogg'd, flay'd, burn'd, boil'd, buried alive, worried by dogs; and here, nearer home, the Netherlands, Sicily, Naples, Lombardy. I say no more—only this, their lot is yours. Forward to London with me! forward to London! If ye love your liberties or your skins, forward to London!

CROWD. Forward to London! A Wyatt! a Wyatt!

WYATT. But first to Rochester, to take the guns
From out the vessels lying in the river.
Then on.

A PEASANT. Ay, but I fear we be too few, Sir Thomas.

WYATT. Not many yet. The world as yet, my friend,
Is not half-waked; but every parish tower
Shall clang and clash alarum as we pass,
And pour along the land, and swoll'n and fed
With indraughts and side-currents, in full force
Roll upon London.

CROWD. A Wyatt! a Wyatt! Forward!

KNYVETT. Wyatt, shall we proclaim Elizabeth?

WYATT. I'll think upon it, Knyvett.

KNYVETT. Or Lady Jane?

WYATT. No, poor soul; no.
Ah, gray old castle of Alington, green field
Beside the brimming Medway, it may chance
That I shall never look upon you more.

KNYVETT. Come, now, you're sonnetting again.

WYATT. Not I.
I'll have my head set higher in the state;
Or—if the Lord God will it—on the stake. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—GUILDHALL.

SIR THOMAS WHITE (The Lord Mayor), LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, ALDERMEN *and* CITIZENS.

WHITE. I trust the Queen comes hither with her guards.

HOWARD. Ay, all in arms.

[*Several of the citizens move hastily out of the hall.*

Why do they hurry out there?

WHITE. My Lord, cut out the rotten from your apple,
Your apple eats the better. Let them go.
They go like those old Pharisees in John
Convicted by their conscience, arrant cowards,
Or tamperers with that treason out of Kent.
When will her Grace be here?

HOWARD. In some few minutes.
She will address your guilds and companies.
I have striven in vain to raise a man for her.
But help her in this exigency, make
Your city loyal, and be the mightiest man
This day in England.

WHITE. I am Thomas White.
Few things have fail'd to which I set my will.
I do my most and best.

HOWARD. You know that after
The Captain Brett, who went with your train bands
To fight with Wyatt, had gone over to him
With all his men, the Queen in that distress
Sent Cornwallis and Hastings to the traitor,
Feigning to treat with him about her marriage—
Know too what Wyatt said.

WHITE. He'd sooner be,

While this same marriage question was being argued,
Trusted than trust—the scoundrel—and demanded
Possession of her person and the Tower.

HOWARD. And four of her poor Council, too, my Lord,

As hostages.

WHITE. I know it. What do and say
Your Council at this hour?

HOWARD. I will trust you.
We fling ourselves on you, my Lord. The Council,
The Parliament as well, are troubled waters;
And yet like waters of the fen they know not
Which way to flow. All hangs on her address,
And upon you, Lord Mayor.

WHITE. How look'd the city
When now you past it? Quiet?

HOWARD. Like our Council,
Your city is divided. As we past,
Some hail'd, some hiss'd us. There were citizens
Stood each before his shut-up booth, and look'd
As grim and grave as from a funeral.
And here a knot of ruffians all in rags,
With execrating execrable eyes,
Glared at the citizen. Here was a young mother,
Her face on flame, her red hair all blown back,
She shrilling 'Wyatt,' while the boy she held
Mimick'd and piped her 'Wyatt,' as red as she

In hair and cheek; and almost elbowing her,
So close they stood, another, mute as death,
And white as her own milk; her babe in arms
Had felt the faltering of his mother's heart,
And look'd as bloodless. Here a pious Catholic,
Mumbling and mixing up in his sacred prayers
Heaven and earth's Maries; over his bow'd shoulder
Scowl'd that world-hated and world-hating beast,
A haggard Anabaptist. Many such groups.
The names of Wyatt, Elizabeth, Courtenay,
Nay the Queen's right to reign—'fore God, the rogues—
Were freely buzzed among them. So I say
Your city is divided, and I fear
One scruple, this or that way, of success
Would turn it thither. Wherefore now the Queen
In this low pulse and palsy of the state,
Bad me to tell you that she counts on you
And on myself as her two hands; on you,
In your own city, as her right, my Lord,
For you are loyal.

WHITE. Am I Thomas White?
One word before she comes. Elizabeth—
Her name is much abused among these traitors.
Where is she? She is loved by all of us.
I scarce have heart to mingle in this matter,
If she should be mishandled.

HOWARD. No; she shall not.

The Queen had written her word to come to court:
Methought I smelt out Renard in the letter,
And fearing for her, sent a secret missive,
Which told her to be sick. Happily or not,
It found her sick indeed.

WHITE. God send her well;
Here comes her Royal Grace.

Enter GUARDS, MARY, *and* GARDINER. SIR THOMAS WHITE *leads her to a raised seat on the daïs.*

WHITE. I, the Lord Mayor, and these our companies
And guilds of London, gathered here, beseech
Your Highness to accept our lowliest thanks
For your most princely presence; and we pray
That we, your true and loyal citizens,
From your own royal lips, at once may know
The wherefore of this coming, and so learn
Your royal will, and do it.—I, Lord Mayor
Of London, and our guilds and companies.

MARY. In mine own person am I come to you,
To tell you what indeed ye see and know,
How traitorously these rebels out of Kent
Have made strong head against ourselves and you.
They would not have me wed the Prince of Spain;
That was their pretext—so they spake at first—

But we sent divers of our Council to them,
And by their answers to the question ask'd,
It doth appear this marriage is the least
Of all their quarrel.
They have betrayed the treason of their hearts:
Seek to possess our person, hold our Tower,
Place and displace our councillors, and use
Both us and them according as they will.
Now what I am ye know right well—your Queen;
To whom, when I was wedded to the realm
And the realm's laws (the spousal ring whereof,
Not ever to be laid aside, I wear
Upon this finger), ye did promise full
Allegiance and obedience to the death.
Ye know my father was the rightful heir
Of England, and his right came down to me,
Corroborate by your acts of Parliament:
And as ye were most loving unto him,
So doubtless will ye show yourselves to me.
Wherefore, ye will not brook that anyone
Should seize our person, occupy our state,
More specially a traitor so presumptuous
As this same Wyatt, who hath tamper'd with
A public ignorance, and, under colour
Of such a cause as hath no colour, seeks
To bend the laws to his own will, and yield
Full scope to persons rascal and forlorn,

To make free spoil and havock of your goods.
Now as your Prince, I say,
I, that was never mother, cannot tell
How mothers love their children; yet, methinks,
A prince as naturally may love his people
As these their children; and be sure your Queen
So loves you, and so loving, needs must deem
This love by you return'd as heartily;
And thro' this common knot and bond of love,
Doubt not they will be speedily overthrown.
As to this marriage, ye shall understand
We made thereto no treaty of ourselves,
And set no foot theretoward unadvised
Of all our Privy Council; furthermore,
This marriage had the assent of those to whom
The king, my father, did commit his trust;
Who not alone esteem'd it honourable,
But for the wealth and glory of our realm,
And all our loving subjects, most expedient.
As to myself,
I am not so set on wedlock as to choose
But where I list, nor yet so amorous
That I must needs be husbanded; I thank God,
I have lived a virgin, and I noway doubt
But that with God's grace, I can live so still.
Yet if it might please God that I should leave
Some fruit of mine own body after me,

To be your king, ye would rejoice thereat,
And it would be your comfort, as I trust;
And truly, if I either thought or knew
This marriage should bring loss or danger to you,
My subjects, or impair in any way
This royal state of England, I would never
Consent thereto, nor marry while I live;
Moreover, if this marriage should not seem,
Before our own High Court of Parliament,
To be of rich advantage to our realm,
We will refrain, and not alone from this,
Likewise from any other, out of which
Looms the least chance of peril to our realm.
Wherefore be bold, and with your lawful Prince
Stand fast against our enemies and yours,
And fear them not. I fear them not. My Lord,
I leave Lord William Howard in your city,
To guard and keep you whole and safe from all
The spoil and sackage aim'd at by these rebels,
Who mouth and foam against the Prince of Spain.

VOICES. Long live Queen Mary!
Down with Wyatt!
The Queen!

WHITE. Three voices from our guilds and companies!

You are shy and proud like Englishmen, my masters,
And will not trust your voices. Understand:

Your lawful Prince hath come to cast herself
On loyal hearts and bosoms, hoped to fall
Into the wide spread arms of fealty,
And finds you statues. Speak at once—and all!
For whom?
Our sovereign Lady by King Harry's will;
The Queen of England—or the Kentish Squire?
I know you loyal. Speak! in the name of God!
The Queen of England or the rabble of Kent?
The reeking dungfork master of the mace!
Your havings wasted by the scythe and spade—
Your rights and charters hobnail'd into slush—
Your houses fired—your gutters bubbling blood——

ACCLAMATION. No! No! The Queen! the Queen!

WHITE. Your Highness hears
This burst and bass of loyal harmony,
And how we each and all of us abhor
The venomous, bestial, devilish revolt
Of Thomas Wyatt. Hear us now make oath
To raise your Highness thirty thousand men,
And arm and strike as with one hand, and brush
This Wyatt from our shoulders, like a flea
That might have leapt upon us unawares.
Swear with me noble fellow-citizens, all,
With all your trades, and guilds, and companies.

CITIZENS. We swear!

MARY. We thank your Lordship and your loyal city. [*Exit* MARY *attended.*

WHITE. I trust this day, thro' God, I have saved the crown.

FIRST ALDERMAN. Ay, so my Lord of Pembroke in command
Of all her force be safe; but there are doubts.

SECOND ALDERMAN. I hear that Gardiner, coming with the Queen,
And meeting Pembroke, bent to his saddle-bow,
As if to win the man by flattering him.
Is he so safe to fight upon her side?

FIRST ALDERMAN. If not, there's no man safe.

WHITE. Yes, Thomas White.
I am safe enough; no man need flatter me.

SECOND ALDERMAN. Nay, no man need; but did you mark our Queen?
The colour freely play'd into her face,
And the half sight which makes her look so stern,
Seem'd thro' that dim dilated world of hers,
To read our faces; I have never seen her
So queenly or so goodly.

WHITE. Courage, sir,
That makes or man or woman look their goodliest.
Die like the torn fox dumb, but never whine
Like that poor heart, Northumberland, at the block.

BAGENHALL. The man had children, and he whined for those.

Methinks most men are but poor-hearted, else
Should we so doat on courage, were it commoner?
The Queen stands up, and speaks for her own self;
And all men cry, She is queenly, she is goodly.
Yet she's no goodlier; tho' my Lord Mayor here,
By his own rule, he hath been so bold to-day,
Should look more goodly than the rest of us.

WHITE. Goodly? I feel most goodly heart and hand,

And strong to throw ten Wyatts and all Kent.
Ha! ha! sir; but you jest; I love it: a jest
In time of danger shows the pulses even.
Be merry! yet, Sir Ralph, you look but sad.
I dare avouch you'd stand up for yourself,
Tho' all the world should bay like winter wolves.

BAGENHALL. Who knows? the man is proven by the hour.

WHITE. The man should make the hour, not this the man;

And Thomas White will prove this Thomas Wyatt,
And he will prove an Iden to this Cade,
And he will play the Walworth to this Wat;
Come, sirs, we prate; hence all—gather your men—
Myself must bustle. Wyatt comes to Southwark;

I'll have the drawbridge hewn into the Thames,
And see the citizens arm'd. Good day; good day.
[*Exit* WHITE.

BAGENHALL. One of much outdoor bluster.

HOWARD. For all that,
Most honest, brave, and skilful; and his wealth
A fountain of perennial alms—his fault
So thoroughly to believe in his own self.

BAGENHALL. Yet thoroughly to believe in one's own self,
So one's own self be thorough, were to do
Great things, my Lord.

HOWARD. It may be.

BAGENHALL. I have heard
One of your Council fleer and jeer at him.

HOWARD. The nursery-cocker'd child will jeer at aught
That may seem strange beyond his nursery.
The statesman that shall jeer and fleer at men,
Makes enemies for himself and for his king;
And if he jeer not seeing the true man
Behind his folly, he is thrice the fool;
And if he see the man and still will jeer,
He is child and fool, and traitor to the State.
Who is he? let me shun him.

BAGENHALL. Nay, my Lord,
He is damn'd enough already.

HOWARD. I must set
The guard at Ludgate. Fare you well, Sir Ralph.

BAGENHALL. 'Who knows?' I am for England.
But who knows,
That knows the Queen, the Spaniard, and the Pope,
Whether I be for Wyatt, or the Queen. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—LONDON BRIDGE.

Enter SIR THOMAS WYATT *and* BRETT.

WYATT. Brett, when the Duke of Norfolk moved against us
Thou cried'st 'A Wyatt!' and flying to our side
Left his all bare, for which I love thee, Brett.
Have for thine asking aught that I can give,
For thro' thine help we are come to London Bridge;
But how to cross it balks me. I fear we cannot.

BRETT. Nay, hardly, save by boat, swimming, or wings.

WYATT. Last night I climb'd into the gate-house, Brett,
And scared the gray old porter and his wife.
And then I crept along the gloom and saw
They had hewn the drawbridge down into the river.
It roll'd as black as death; and that same tide
Which, coming with our coming, seem'd to smile

And sparkle like our fortune as thou saidest,
Ran sunless down, and moan'd against the piers.
But o'er the chasm I saw Lord William Howard
By torchlight, and his guards; four guns gaped at me,
Black, silent mouths: had Howard spied me there
And made them speak, as well he might have done,
Their voice had left me none to tell you this.
What shall we do?

BRETT. On somehow. To go back
Were to lose all.

WYATT. On over London Bridge
We cannot: stay we cannot; there is ordnance
On the White Tower and on the Devil's Tower,
And pointed full at Southwark; we must round
By Kingston Bridge.

BRETT. Ten miles about.

WYATT. Ev'n so.
But I have notice from our partisans
Within the city that they will stand by us
If Ludgate can be reach'd by dawn to-morrow.

Enter one of WYATT'S MEN.

MAN. Sir Thomas, I've found this paper; pray your worship read it; I know not my letters; the old priests taught me nothing.

WYATT (*reads*). 'Whosoever will apprehend the

traitor Thomas Wyatt shall have a hundred pounds for reward.'

MAN. Is that it? That's a big lot of money.

WYATT. Ay, ay, my friend; not read it? 'tis not written
Half plain enough. Give me a piece of paper!
[*Writes* 'THOMAS WYATT' *large.*
There, any man can read that. [*Sticks it in his cap.*

BRETT. But that's foolhardy.

WYATT. No! boldness, which will give my followers boldness.

Enter MAN *with a prisoner.*

MAN. We found him, your worship, a plundering o' Bishop Winchester's house; he says he's a poor gentleman.

WYATT. Gentleman! a thief! Go hang him. Shall we make
Those that we come to serve our sharpest foes?

BRETT. Sir Thomas—

WYATT. Hang him, I say.

BRETT. Wyatt, but now you promised me a boon.

WYATT. Ay, and I warrant this fine fellow's life.

BRETT. Ev'n so; he was my neighbour once in Kent.
He's poor enough, has drunk and gambled out

All that he had, and gentleman he was.
We have been glad together; let him live.

WYATT. He has gambled for his life, and lost, he hangs.

No, no, my word's my word. Take thy poor gentleman!
Gamble thyself at once out of my sight,
Or I will dig thee with my dagger. Away!
Women and children!

Enter a Crowd *of* WOMEN *and* CHILDREN.

FIRST WOMAN. O Sir Thomas, Sir Thomas, pray you go away, Sir Thomas, or you'll make the White Tower a black 'un for us this blessed day. He'll be the death on us; and you'll set the Divil's Tower a-spitting, and he'll smash all our bits o' things worse than Philip o' Spain.

SECOND WOMAN. Don't ye now go to think that we be for Philip o' Spain.

THIRD WOMAN. No, we know that ye be come to kill the Queen, and we'll pray for you all on our bended knees. But o' God's mercy don't ye kill the Queen here, Sir Thomas; look ye, here's little Dickon, and little Robin, and little Jenny—though she's but a side-cousin—and all on our knees, we pray you to kill the Queen further off, Sir Thomas.

WYATT. My friends, I have not come to kill the Queen
Or here or there: I come to save you all,
And I'll go further off.

CROWD. Thanks, Sir Thomas, we be beholden to you, and we'll pray for you on our bended knees till our lives' end.

WYATT. Be happy, I am your friend. To Kingston, forward! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—ROOM IN THE GATEHOUSE OF WESTMINSTER PALACE.

MARY, ALICE, GARDINER, RENARD, LADIES.

GARDINER. Their cry is, Philip never shall be king.

MARY. Lord Pembroke in command of all our force
Will front their cry and shatter them into dust.

ALICE. Was not Lord Pembroke with Northumberland?
O madam, if this Pembroke should be false?

MARY. No, girl; most brave and loyal, brave and loyal.
His breaking with Northumberland broke Northumberland.
At the park gate he hovers with our guards.
These Kentish ploughmen cannot break the guards.

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER. Wyatt, your Grace, hath broken thro' the guards
And gone to Ludgate.

GARDINER. Madam, I much fear
That all is lost; but we can save your Grace.
The river still is free. I do beseech you,
There yet is time, take boat and pass to Windsor.

MARY. I pass to Windsor and I lose my crown.

GARDINER. Pass, then, I pray your Highness, to the Tower.

MARY. I shall but be their prisoner in the Tower.

CRIES *without.* The traitor! treason! Pembroke!

LADIES. Treason! treason!

MARY. Peace.
False to Northumberland, is he false to me?
Bear witness, Renard, that I live and die
The true and faithful bride of Philip—A sound
Of feet and voices thickening hither—blows—
Hark, there is battle at the palace gates,
And I will out upon the gallery.

LADIES. No, no, your Grace; see there the arrows flying.

MARY. I am Harry's daughter, Tudor, and not Fear. [*Goes out on the gallery.*

The guards are all driven in, skulk into corners
Like rabbits to their holes. A gracious guard
Truly; shame on them! they have shut the gates!

Enter SIR ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

SOUTHWELL. The porter, please your Grace, hath shut the gates
On friend and foe. Your gentlemen-at-arms,
If this be not your Grace's order, cry
To have the gates set wide again, and they
With their good battleaxes will do you right
Against all traitors.

MARY. They are the flower of England; set the gates wide. [*Exit* SOUTHWELL.

Enter COURTENAY.

COURTENAY. All lost, all lost, all yielded! A barge, a barge!
The Queen must to the Tower.

MARY. Whence come you, sir?

COURTENAY. From Charing Cross; the rebels broke us there,
And I sped hither with what haste I might
To save my royal cousin.

MARY. Where is Pembroke?

COURTENAY. I left him somewhere in the thick of it.

MARY. Left him and fled; and thou that would'st be King,
And hast nor heart nor honour. I myself
Will down into the battle and there bide
The upshot of my quarrel, or die with those
That are no cowards and no Courtenays.

COURTENAY. I do not love your Grace should call me coward.

Enter another MESSENGER.

MESSENGER. Over, your Grace, all crush'd; the brave Lord William
Thrust him from Ludgate, and the traitor flying
To Temple Bar, there by Sir Maurice Berkeley
Was taken prisoner.

MARY. To the Tower with *him!*

MESSENGER. 'Tis said he told Sir Maurice there was one
Cognisant of this, and party thereunto,
My Lord of Devon.

MARY. To the Tower with *him!*

COURTENAY. O la, the Tower, the Tower, always the Tower,
I shall grow into it—I shall be the Tower.

MARY. Your Lordship may not have so long to wait
Remove him!

COURTENAY. La, to whistle out my life,
And carve my coat upon the walls again!

[*Exit* COURTENAY *guarded.*

MESSENGER. Also this Wyatt did confess the Princess
Cognisant thereof, and party thereunto.

MARY. What? whom—whom did you say?

MESSENGER. Elizabeth,
Your Royal sister.

MARY. To the Tower with *her!*
My foes are at my feet and I am Queen.

[GARDINER *and her* LADIES *kneel to her.*

GARDINER (*rising*). There let them lie, your foot-stool! (*Aside.*) Can I strike
Elizabeth?—not now and save the life
Of Devon: if I save him, he and his
Are bound to me—may strike hereafter. (*Aloud.*) Madam,
What Wyatt said, or what they said he said,
Cries of the moment and the street—

MARY. He said it.

GARDINER. Your courts of justice will determine that.

RENARD (*advancing*). I trust by this your Highness will allow
Some spice of wisdom in my telling you,
When last we talk'd, that Philip would not come

Till Guildford Dudley and the Duke of Suffolk,
And Lady Jane had left us.

MARY. They shall die.

RENARD. And your so loving sister?

MARY. She shall die.

My foes are at my feet, and Philip King. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—THE CONDUIT IN GRACECHURCH,

Painted with the Nine Worthies, among them King Henry VIII. holding a book, on it inscribed 'Verbum Dei.'

Enter SIR RALPH BAGENHALL *and* SIR THOMAS STAFFORD.

BAGENHALL. A hundred here and hundreds hang'd in Kent.
The tigress had unsheath'd her nails at last,
And Renard and the Chancellor sharpen'd them.
In every London street a gibbet stood.
They are down to-day. Here by this house was one;
The traitor husband dangled at the door,
And when the traitor wife came out for bread
To still the petty treason therewithin,
Her cap would brush his heels.

STAFFORD. It is Sir Ralph,

And muttering to himself as heretofore.
Sir, see you aught up yonder?

BAGENHALL. I miss something.
The tree that only bears dead fruit is gone.

STAFFORD. What tree, sir?

BAGENHALL. Well, the tree in Virgil, sir,
That bears not its own apples.

STAFFORD. What! the gallows?

BAGENHALL. Sir, this dead fruit was ripening overmuch,
And had to be removed lest living Spain
Should sicken at dead England.

STAFFORD. Not so dead,
But that a shock may rouse her.

BAGENHALL. I believe
Sir Thomas Stafford?

STAFFORD. I am ill disguised.

BAGENHALL. Well, are you not in peril here?

STAFFORD. I think so.
I came to feel the pulse of England, whether
It beats hard at this marriage. Did you see it?

BAGENHALL. Stafford, I am a sad man and a serious.
Far liefer had I in my country hall
Been reading some old book, with mine old hound
Couch'd at my hearth, and mine old flask of wine
Beside me, than have seen it: yet I saw it.

STAFFORD. Good, was it splendid?

BAGENHALL. Ay, if Dukes, and Earls,
And Counts, and sixty Spanish cavaliers,
Some six or seven Bishops, diamonds, pearls,
That royal commonplace too, cloth of gold,
Could make it so.

STAFFORD. And what was Mary's dress?

BAGENHALL. Good faith, I was too sorry for the woman
To mark the dress. She wore red shoes!

STAFFORD. Red shoes!

BAGENHALL. Scarlet, as if her feet were wash'd in blood,
As if she had waded in it.

STAFFORD. Were your eyes
So bashful that you look'd no higher?

BAGENHALL. A diamond,
And Philip's gift, as proof of Philip's love,
Who hath not any for any,—tho' a true one,
Blazed false upon her heart.

STAFFORD. But this proud Prince—

BAGENHALL. Nay, he is King, you know, the King of Naples.
The father ceded Naples, that the son
Being a King, might wed a Queen—O he
Flamed in brocade—white satin his trunk-hose,
Inwrought with silver,—on his neck a collar,

Gold, thick with diamonds; hanging down from this
The Golden Fleece—and round his knee, misplaced,
Our English Garter, studded with great emeralds,
Rubies, I know not what. Have you had enough
Of all this gear?

STAFFORD. Ay, since you hate the telling it.
How look'd the Queen?

BAGENHALL. No fairer for her jewels.
And I could see that as the new-made couple
Came from the Minster, moving side by side
Beneath one canopy, ever and anon
She cast on him a vassal smile of love,
Which Philip with a glance of some distaste,
Or so methought, return'd. I may be wrong, sir.
This marriage will not hold.

STAFFORD. I think with you.
The King of France will help to break it.

BAGENHALL. France!
We once had half of France, and hurl'd our battles
Into the heart of Spain; but England now
Is but a ball chuck'd between France and Spain,
His in whose hand she drops; Harry of Bolingbroke
Had holpen Richard's tottering throne to stand,
Could Harry have foreseen that all our nobles
Would perish on the civil slaughter-field,
And leave the people naked to the crown,
And the crown naked to the people; the crown

Female, too! Sir, no woman's regimen
Can save us. We are fallen, and as I think,
Never to rise again.

STAFFORD. You are too black-blooded.
I'd make a move myself to hinder that:
I know some lusty fellows there in France.

BAGENHALL. You would but make us weaker, Thomas Stafford.
Wyatt was a good soldier, yet he fail'd,
And strengthen'd Philip.

STAFFORD. Did not his last breath
Clear Courtenay and the Princess from the charge
Of being his co-rebels?

BAGENHALL. Ay, but then
What such a one as Wyatt says is nothing:
We have no men among us. The new Lords
Are quieted with their sop of Abbeylands,
And ev'n before the Queen's face Gardiner buys them
With Philip's gold. All greed, no faith, no courage!
Why, ev'n the haughty prince, Northumberland,
The leader of our Reformation, knelt
And blubber'd like a lad, and on the scaffold
Recanted, and resold himself to Rome.

STAFFORD. I swear you do your country wrong, Sir Ralph.
I know a set of exiles over there,
Dare-devils, that would eat fire and spit it out

At Philip's beard: they pillage Spain already.
The French King winks at it. An hour will come
When they will sweep her from the seas. No men?
Did not Lord Suffolk die like a true man?
Is not Lord William Howard a true man?
Yea, you yourself, altho' you are black-blooded:
And I, by God, believe myself a man.
Ay, even in the church there is a man—
Cranmer.
Fly would he not, when all men bad him fly.
And what a letter he wrote against the Pope!
There's a brave man, if any.

BAGENHALL. Ay; if it hold.

CROWD (*coming on*). God save their Graces!

STAFFORD. Bagenhall, I see
The Tudor green and white. (*Trumpets.*) They are coming now.
And here's a crowd as thick as herring-shoals.

BAGENHALL. Be limpets to this pillar, or we are torn
Down the strong wave of brawlers.

CROWD. God save their Graces!

[*Procession of Trumpeters, Javelin-men, etc.; then Spanish and Flemish Nobles intermingled.*

STAFFORD. Worth seeing, Bagenhall! These black dog-Dons
Garb themselves bravely. Who's the long-face there,
Looks very Spain of very Spain?

BAGENHALL. The Duke
Of Alva, an iron soldier.

STAFFORD. And the Dutchman,
Now laughing at some jest?

BAGENHALL. William of Orange,
William the Silent.

STAFFORD. Why do they call him so?

BAGENHALL. He keeps, they say, some secret that may cost
Philip his life.

STAFFORD. But then he looks so merry.

BAGENHALL. I cannot tell you why they call him so.

[*The* KING *and* QUEEN *pass, attended by Peers of the Realm, Officers of State, etc. Cannon shot off.*

CROWD. Philip and Mary, Philip and Mary!
Long live the King and Queen, Philip and Mary!

STAFFORD. They smile as if content with one another.

BAGENHALL. A smile abroad is oft a scowl at home.

[KING *and* QUEEN *pass on. Procession.*

FIRST CITIZEN. I thought this Philip had been one of those black devils of Spain, but he hath a yellow beard.

SECOND CITIZEN. Not red like Iscariot's.

FIRST CITIZEN. Like a carrot's, as thou say'st, and

English carrot's better than Spanish licorice; but I thought he was a beast.

THIRD CITIZEN. Certain I had heard that every Spaniard carries a tail like a devil under his trunk-hose.

TAILOR. Ay, but see what trunk-hoses! Lord! they be fine; I never stitch'd none such. They make amends for the tails.

FOURTH CITIZEN. Tut! every Spanish priest will tell you that all English heretics have tails.

FIFTH CITIZEN. Death and the Devil—if he find I have one—

FOURTH CITIZEN. Lo! thou hast call'd them up! here they come—a pale horse for Death and Gardiner for the Devil.

Enter GARDINER (*turning back from the procession*).

GARDINER. Knave, wilt thou wear thy cap before the Queen?

MAN. My Lord, I stand so squeezed among the crowd
I cannot lift my hands unto my head.

GARDINER. Knock off his cap there, some of you about him!
See there be others that can use their hands.
Thou art one of Wyatt's men?

MAN. No, my Lord, no.

GARDINER. Thy name, thou knave?

MAN. I am nobody, my Lord.

GARDINER (*shouting*). God's passion! knave, thy name?

MAN. I have ears to hear.

GARDINER. Ay, rascal, if I leave thee ears to hear.
Find out his name and bring it me (*to* ATTENDANT).

ATTENDANT. Ay, my Lord.

GARDINER. Knave, thou shalt lose thine ears and find thy tongue,
And shalt be thankful if I leave thee that.

[*Coming before the Conduit.*

The conduit painted—the nine worthies—ay!
But then what's here? King Harry with a scroll.
Ha—Verbum Dei—verbum—word of God!
God's passion! do you know the knave that painted it?

ATTENDANT. I do, my Lord.

GARDINER. Tell him to paint it out,
And put some fresh device in lieu of it—
A pair of gloves, a pair of gloves, sir; ha?
There is no heresy there.

ATTENDANT. I will, my Lord;
The man shall paint a pair of gloves. I am sure
(Knowing the man) he wrought it ignorantly,
And not from any malice.

GARDINER. Word of God
In English! over this the brainless loons

That cannot spell Esaïas from St. Paul,
Make themselves drunk and mad, fly out and flare
Into rebellions. I'll have their bibles burnt.
The bible is the priest's. Ay! fellow, what!
Stand staring at me! shout, you gaping rogue!

MAN. I have, my Lord, shouted till I am hoarse.

GARDINER. What hast thou shouted, knave?

MAN. Long live Queen Mary!

GARDINER. Knave, there be two. There be both King and Queen,
Philip and Mary. Shout!

MAN. Nay, but, my Lord,
The Queen comes first, Mary and Philip.

GARDINER. Shout, then,
Mary and Philip!

MAN. Mary and Philip!

GARDINER. Now,
Thou hast shouted for thy pleasure, shout for mine!
Philip and Mary!

MAN. Must it be so, my Lord?

GARDINER. Ay, knave.

MAN. Philip and Mary!

GARDINER. I distrust thee.
Thine is a half voice and a lean assent.
What is thy name?

MAN. Sanders.

GARDINER. What else?

MAN. Zerubbabel.

GARDINER. Where dost thou live?

MAN. In Cornhill.

GARDINER. Where, knave, where?

MAN. Sign of the Talbot.

GARDINER. Come to me to-morrow.—
Rascal!—this land is like a hill of fire,
One crater opens when another shuts.
But so I get the laws against the heretic,
Spite of Lord Paget and Lord William Howard,
And others of our Parliament, revived,
I will show fire on my side—stake and fire—
Sharp work and short. The knaves are easily cow'd.
Follow their Majesties. [*Exit. The crowd following.*

BAGENHALL. As proud as Becket.

STAFFORD. You would not have him murder'd as Becket was?

BAGENHALL. No—murder fathers murder: but I say
There is no man—there was one woman with us—
It was a sin to love her married, dead
I cannot choose but love her.

STAFFORD. Lady Jane?

CROWD (*going off*). God save their Graces!

STAFFORD. Did you see her die?

BAGENHALL. No, no; her innocent blood had blinded me.

You call me too black-blooded—true enough
Her dark dead blood is in my heart with mine.
If ever I cry out against the Pope
Her dark dead blood that ever moves with mine
Will stir the living tongue and make the cry.

STAFFORD. Yet doubtless you can tell me how she died?

BAGENHALL. Seventeen—and knew eight languages—in music
Peerless—her needle perfect, and her learning
Beyond the churchmen; yet so meek, so modest,
So wife-like humble to the trivial boy
Mismatch'd with her for policy! I have heard
She would not take a last farewell of him,
She fear'd it might unman him for his end.
She could not be unmann'd—no, nor outwoman'd—
Seventeen—a rose of grace!
Girl never breathed to rival such a rose;
Rose never blew that equall'd such a bud.

STAFFORD. Pray you go on.

BAGENHALL. She came upon the scaffold,
And said she was condemn'd to die for treason;
She had but follow'd the device of those
Her nearest kin: she thought they knew the laws.
But for herself, she knew but little law,
And nothing of the titles to the crown;
She had no desire for that, and wrung her hands,

And trusted God would save her thro' the blood
Of Jesus Christ alone.

STAFFORD. Pray you go on.

BAGENHALL. Then knelt and said the Miserere Mei—

But all in English, mark you; rose again,
And, when the headsman pray'd to be forgiven,
Said, 'You will give me my true crown at last,
But do it quickly;' then all wept but she,
Who changed not colour when she saw the block,
But ask'd him, childlike: 'Will you take it off
Before I lay me down?' 'No, madam,' he said,
Gasping; and when her innocent eyes were bound,
She, with her poor blind hands feeling—'where is it?
Where is it?'—You must fancy that which follow'd,
If you have heart to do it!

CROWD (*in the distance*). God save their Graces!

STAFFORD. Their Graces, our disgraces! God confound them!

Why, she's grown bloodier! when I last was here,
This was against her conscience—would be murder!

BAGENHALL. The 'Thou shalt do no murder,' which God's hand

Wrote on her conscience, Mary rubb'd out pale—
She could not make it white—and over that,
Traced in the blackest text of Hell—'Thou shalt!'
And sign'd it—Mary!

STAFFORD. Philip and the Pope
Must have sign'd too. I hear this Legate's coming
To bring us absolution from the Pope.
The Lords and Commons will bow down before him—
You are of the house? what will you do, Sir Ralph?

BAGENHALL. And why should I be bolder than the rest,
Or honester than all?

STAFFORD. But, sir, if I—
And oversea they say this state of yours
Hath no more mortice than a tower of cards;
And that a puff would do it—then if I
And others made that move I touch'd upon,
Back'd by the power of France, and landing here,
Came with a sudden splendour, shout, and show,
And dazzled men and deafen'd by some bright
Loud venture, and the people so unquiet—
And I the race of murder'd Buckingham—
Not for myself, but for the kingdom—Sir,
I trust that you would fight along with us.

BAGENHALL. No; you would fling your lives into the gulf.

STAFFORD. But if this Philip, as he's like to do,
Left Mary a wife-widow here alone,
Set up a viceroy, sent his myriads hither
To seize upon the forts and fleet, and make us
A Spanish province; would you not fight then?

BAGENHALL. I think I should fight then.

STAFFORD. I am sure of it.

Hist! there's the face coming on here of one
Who knows me. I must leave you. Fare you well,
You'll hear of me again.

BAGENHALL. Upon the scaffold. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—ROOM IN WHITEHALL PALACE.

MARY. *Enter* PHILIP *and* CARDINAL POLE.

POLE. Ave Maria, gratia plena, Benedicta tu in mulieribus.

MARY. Loyal and royal cousin, humblest thanks.
Had you a pleasant voyage up the river?

POLE. We had your royal barge, and that same chair,
Or rather throne of purple, on the deck.
Our silver cross sparkled before the prow,
The ripples twinkled at their diamond-dance,
The boats that follow'd, were as glowing-gay
As regal gardens; and your flocks of swans,
As fair and white as angels; and your shores
Wore in mine eyes the green of Paradise.
My foreign friends, who dream'd us blanketed
In ever-closing fog, were much amazed
To find as fair a sun as might have flash'd
Upon their lake of Garda, fire the Thames;

Our voyage by sea was all but miracle;
And here the river flowing from the sea,
Not toward it (for they thought not of our tides),
Seem'd as a happy miracle to make glide—
In quiet—home your banish'd countryman.

MARY. We heard that you were sick in Flanders, cousin.

POLE. A dizziness.

MARY. And how came you round again?

POLE. The scarlet thread of Rahab saved her life;
And mine, a little letting of the blood.

MARY. Well? now?

POLE. Ay, cousin, as the heathen giant
Had but to touch the ground, his force return'd—
Thus, after twenty years of banishment,
Feeling my native land beneath my foot,
I said thereto: 'Ah, native land of mine,
Thou art much beholden to this foot of mine,
That hastes with full commission from the Pope
To absolve thee from thy guilt of heresy.
Thou hast disgraced me and attainted me,
And mark'd me ev'n as Cain, and I return
As Peter, but to bless thee: make me well.'
Methinks the good land heard me, for to-day
My heart beats twenty, when I see you, cousin.
Ah, gentle cousin, since your Herod's death,
How oft hath Peter knock'd at Mary's gate!

And Mary would have risen and let him in,
But, Mary, there were those within the house
Who would not have it.
MARY. True, good cousin Pole;
And there were also those without the house
Who would not have it.
POLE. I believe so, cousin.
State-policy and church-policy are conjoint,
But Janus-faces looking diverse ways.
I fear the Emperor much misvalued me.
But all is well; 'twas ev'n the will of God,
Who, waiting till the time had ripen'd, now,
Makes me his mouth of holy greeting. 'Hail,
Daughter of God, and saver of the faith.
Sit benedictus fructus ventris tui!'
MARY. Ah, heaven!
POLE. Unwell, your Grace?
MARY. No, cousin, happy—
Happy to see you; never yet so happy
Since I was crown'd.
POLE. Sweet cousin, you forget
That long low minster where you gave your hand
To this great Catholic King.
PHILIP. Well said, Lord Legate.
MARY. Nay, not well said; I thought of you, my liege,
Ev'n as I spoke.

PHILIP. Ay, Madam; my Lord Paget
Waits to present our Council to the Legate.
Sit down here, all; Madam, between us you.

POLE. Lo, now you are enclosed with boards of cedar,
Our little sister of the Song of Songs!
You are doubly fenced and shielded sitting here
Between the two most high-set thrones on earth,
The Emperor's highness happily symboll'd by
The King your husband, the Pope's Holiness
By mine own self.

MARY. True, cousin, I am happy.
When will you that we summon both our houses
To take this absolution from your lips,
And be regather'd to the Papal fold?

POLE. In Britain's calendar the brightest day
Beheld our rough forefathers break their Gods,
And clasp the faith in Christ; but after that
Might not St. Andrew's be her happiest day?

MARY. Then these shall meet upon St. Andrew's day.

Enter PAGET, *who presents the Council. Dumb show.*

POLE. I am an old man wearied with my journey,
Ev'n with my joy. Permit me to withdraw.
To Lambeth?

PHILIP. Ay, Lambeth has ousted Cranmer.
It was not meet the heretic swine should live
In Lambeth.

MARY. There or anywhere, or at all.

PHILIP. We have had it swept and garnish'd after him.

POLE. Not for the seven devils to enter in?

PHILIP. No, for we trust they parted in the swine.

POLE. True, and I am the Angel of the Pope.
Farewell, your Graces.

PHILIP. Nay, not here—to me;
I will go with you to the waterside.

POLE. Not be my Charon to the counter side?

PHILIP. No, my Lord Legate, the Lord Chancellor goes.

POLE. And unto no dead world; but Lambeth palace,
Henceforth a centre of the living faith.

[*Exeunt* PHILIP, POLE, PAGET, *etc.*

Manet MARY.

MARY. He hath awaked! he hath awaked!
He stirs within the darkness!
Oh, Philip, husband! now thy love to mine
Will cling more close, and those bleak manners thaw,
That make me shamed and tongue-tied in my love.

The second Prince of Peace—
The great unborn defender of the Faith,
Who will avenge me of mine enemies—
He comes, and my star rises.
The stormy Wyatts and Northumberlands,
The proud ambitions of Elizabeth,
And all her fieriest partisans—are pale
Before my star!
The light of this new learning wanes and dies:
The ghosts of Luther and Zuinglius fade
Into the deathless hell which is their doom
Before my star!
His sceptre shall go forth from Ind to Ind!
His sword shall hew the heretic peoples down!
His faith shall clothe the world that will be his,
Like universal air and sunshine! Open,
Ye everlasting gates! The King is here!—
My star, my son!

Enter PHILIP, DUKE OF ALVA, *etc.*

Oh, Philip, come with me;
Good news have I to tell you, news to make
Both of us happy—ay, the Kingdom too.
Nay come with me—one moment!

PHILIP (*to* ALVA). More than that:
There was one here of late—William the Silent

They call him—he is free enough in talk,
But tells me nothing. You will be, we trust,
Sometime the viceroy of those provinces—
He must deserve his surname better.

ALVA. Ay, sir;
Inherit the Great Silence.

PHILIP. True; the provinces
Are hard to rule and must be hardly ruled;
Most fruitful, yet, indeed, an empty rind,
All hollow'd out with stinging heresies;
And for their heresies, Alva, they will fight;
You must break them or they break you.

ALVA (*proudly*). The first.

PHILIP. Good!
Well, Madam, this new happiness of mine? [*Exeunt.*

Enter THREE PAGES.

FIRST PAGE. News, mates! a miracle, a miracle! news!
The bells must ring; Te Deums must be sung;
The Queen hath felt the motion of her babe!

SECOND PAGE. Ay; but see here!

FIRST PAGE. See what?

SECOND PAGE. This paper, Dickon.
I found it fluttering at the palace gates:—
'The Queen of England is delivered of a dead dog!'

THIRD PAGE. These are the things that madden her. Fie upon it!

FIRST PAGE. Ay; but I hear she hath a dropsy, lad,
Or a high-dropsy, as the doctors call it.

THIRD PAGE. Fie on her dropsy, so she have a dropsy!
I know that she was ever sweet to me.

FIRST PAGE. For thou and thine are Roman to the core.

THIRD PAGE. So thou and thine must be. Take heed!

FIRST PAGE. Not I,
And whether this flash of news be false or true,
So the wine run, and there be revelry,
Content am I. Let all the steeples clash,
Till the sun dance, as upon Easter Day. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—GREAT HALL IN WHITEHALL.

At the far end a daïs. On this three chairs, two under one canopy for MARY *and* PHILIP, *another on the right of these for* POLE. *Under the daïs on* POLE'S *side, ranged along the wall, sit all the Spiritual Peers, and along the wall opposite, all the Temporal. The Commons on cross benches in front, a line of*

approach to the daïs between them. In the foreground, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL *and other Members of the Commons.*

FIRST MEMBER. St. Andrew's day; sit close, sit close, we are friends.

Is reconciled the word? the Pope again?
It must be thus; and yet, cocksbody! how strange
That Gardiner, once so one with all of us
Against this foreign marriage, should have yielded
So utterly!—strange! but stranger still that he,
So fierce against the Headship of the Pope,
Should play the second actor in this pageant
That brings him in; such a cameleon he!

SECOND MEMBER. This Gardiner turn'd his coat in Henry's time;
The serpent that hath slough'd will slough again.

THIRD MEMBER. Tut, then we all are serpents.

SECOND MEMBER. Speak for yourself.

THIRD MEMBER. Ay, and for Gardiner! being English citizen,
How should he bear a bridegroom out of Spain?
The Queen would have him! being English churchman
How should he bear the headship of the Pope?
The Queen would have it! Statesmen that are wise
Shape a necessity, as a sculptor clay,
To their own model.

SECOND MEMBER. Statesmen that are wise
Take truth herself for model. What say you?
[*To* SIR RALPH BAGENHALL.

BAGENHALL. We talk and talk.

FIRST MEMBER. Ay, and what use to talk?
Philip's no sudden alien—the Queen's husband,
He's here, and king, or will be—yet cocksbody!
So hated here! I watch'd a hive of late;
My seven-years' friend was with me, my young boy;
Out crept a wasp, with half the swarm behind.
'Philip!' says he. I had to cuff the rogue
For infant treason.

THIRD MEMBER. But they say that bees,
If any creeping life invade their hive
Too gross to be thrust out, will build him round,
And bind him in from harming of their combs.
And Philip by these articles is bound
From stirring hand or foot to wrong the realm.

SECOND MEMBER. By bonds of beeswax, like your creeping thing;
But your wise bees had stung him first to death.

THIRD MEMBER. Hush, hush!
You wrong the Chancellor: the clauses added
To that same treaty which the emperor sent us
Were mainly Gardiner's: that no foreigner
Hold office in the household, fleet, forts, army;
That if the Queen should die without a child,

The bond between the kingdoms be dissolved;
That Philip should not mix us any way
With his French wars—

SECOND MEMBER. Ay, ay, but what security,
Good sir, for this, if Philip——

THIRD MEMBER. Peace—the Queen,
Philip, and Pole. [*All rise, and stand.*

Enter MARY, PHILIP, *and* POLE.

[GARDINER *conducts them to the three chairs of state.* PHILIP *sits on the* QUEEN'S *left,* POLE *on her right.*

GARDINER. Our short-lived sun, before his winter plunge,
Laughs at the last red leaf, and Andrew's Day.

MARY. Should not this day be held in after years
More solemn than of old?

PHILIP. Madam, my wish
Echoes your Majesty's.

POLE. It shall be so.

GARDINER. Mine echoes both your Graces';
(*aside*) but the Pope—
Can we not have the Catholic church as well
Without as with the Italian? if we cannot,
Why then the Pope.

My lords of the upper house,
And ye, my masters, of the lower house,
Do ye stand fast by that which ye resolved?

VOICES. We do.

GARDINER. And be you all one mind to supplicate
The Legate here for pardon, and acknowledge
The primacy of the Pope?

VOICES. We are all one mind.

GARDINER. Then must I play the vassal to this Pole. [*Aside.*

[*He draws a paper from under his robes and presents it to the* KING *and* QUEEN, *who look through it and return it to him; then ascends a tribune, and reads.*

We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal,
And Commons here in Parliament assembled,
Presenting the whole body of this realm
Of England, and dominions of the same,
Do make most humble suit unto your Majesties,
In our own name and that of all the state,
That by your gracious means and intercession
Our supplication be exhibited
To the Lord Cardinal Pole, sent here as Legate
From our most Holy Father Julius, Pope,
And from the Apostolic see of Rome;
And do declare our penitence and grief

For our long schism and disobedience,
Either in making laws and ordinances
Against the Holy Father's primacy,
Or else by doing or by speaking aught
Which might impugn or prejudice the same;
By this our supplication promising,
As well for our own selves as all the realm,
That now we be and ever shall be quick,
Under and with your Majesties' authorities,
To do to the utmost all that in us lies
Towards the abrogation and repeal
Of all such laws and ordinances made;
Whereon we humbly pray your Majesties,
As persons undefiled with our offence,
So to set forth this humble suit of ours
That we the rather by your intercession
May from the Apostolic see obtain,
Thro' this most reverend Father, absolution,
And full release from danger of all censures
Of Holy Church that we be fall'n into,
So that we may, as children penitent,
Be once again received into the bosom
And unity of Universal Church;
And that this noble realm thro' after years
May in this unity and obedience
Unto the holy see and reigning Pope
Serve God and both your Majesties.

VOICES. Amen. [*All sit.*

[*He again presents the petition to the* KING *and* QUEEN, *who hand it reverentially to* POLE.

POLE (*sitting*). This is the loveliest day that ever smiled
On England. All her breath should, incenselike,
Rise to the heavens in grateful praise of Him
Who now recalls her to His ancient fold.
Lo! once again God to this realm hath given
A token of His more especial Grace;
For as this people were the first of all
The islands call'd into the dawning church
Out of the dead, deep night of heathendom,
So now are these the first whom God hath given
Grace to repent and sorrow for their schism;
And if your penitence be not mockery,
Oh how the blessed angels who rejoice
Over one saved do triumph at this hour
In the reborn salvation of a land
So noble. [*A pause.*
For ourselves we do protest
That our commission is to heal, not harm;
We come not to condemn, but reconcile;
We come not to compel, but call again;
We come not to destroy, but edify;
Nor yet to question things already done;
These are forgiven—matters of the past—

And range with jetsam and with offal thrown
Into the blind sea of forgetfulness. [*A pause.*
Ye have reversed the attainder laid on us
By him who sack'd the house of God; and we,
Amplier than any field on our poor earth
Can render thanks in fruit for being sown,
Do here and now repay you sixty-fold,
A hundred, yea, a thousand thousand-fold,
With heaven for earth.

[*Rising and stretching forth his hands. All kneel but* SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, *who rises and remains standing.*

The Lord who hath redeem'd us
With His own blood, and wash'd us from our sins,
To purchase for Himself a stainless bride;
He, whom the Father hath appointed Head
Of all his church, He by His mercy absolve you!
[*A pause.*
And we by that authority Apostolic
Given unto us, his Legate, by the Pope,
Our Lord and Holy Father, Julius,
God's Vicar and Vicegerent upon earth,
Do here absolve you and deliver you
And every one of you, and all the realm
And its dominions from all heresy,
All schism, and from all and every censure,
Judgment, and pain accruing thereupon;

And also we restore you to the bosom
And unity of Universal Church.

[*Turning to* GARDINER.

Our letters of commission will declare this plainlier.

[QUEEN *heard sobbing. Cries of* Amen! Amen! *Some of the* MEMBERS *embrace one another. All but* SIR RALPH BAGENHALL *pass out into the neighbouring chapel, whence is heard the Te Deum.*

BAGENHALL. We strove against the papacy from the first,
In William's time, in our first Edward's time,
And in my master Henry's time; but now,
The unity of Universal Church,
Mary would have it; and this Gardiner follows;
The unity of Universal Hell,
Philip would have it; and this Gardiner follows!
A Parliament of imitative apes!
Sheep at the gap which Gardiner takes, who not
Believes the Pope, nor any of them believe—
These spaniel-Spaniard English of the time,
Who rub their fawning noses in the dust,
For that is Philip's gold-dust, and adore
This Vicar of their Vicar. Would I had been
Born Spaniard! I had held my head up then.
I am ashamed that I am Bagenhall,
English.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER. Sir Ralph Bagenhall!

BAGENHALL. What of that?

OFFICER. You were the one sole man in either house
Who stood upright when both the houses fell.

BAGENHALL. The houses fell!

OFFICER. I mean the houses knelt
Before the Legate.

BAGENHALL. Do not scrimp your phrase,
But stretch it wider; say when England fell.

OFFICER. I say you were the one sole man who stood.

BAGENHALL. I am the one sole man in either house,
Perchance in England, loves her like a son.

OFFICER. Well, you one man, because you stood upright,
Her Grace the Queen commands you to the Tower.

BAGENHALL. As traitor, or as heretic, or for what?

OFFICER. If any man in any way would be
The one man, he shall be so to his cost.

BAGENHALL. What! will she have my head?

OFFICER. A round fine likelier.
Your pardon. [*Calling to* ATTENDANT.
By the river to the Tower. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—WHITEHALL. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, GARDINER, POLE, PAGET, BONNER, *etc.*

MARY. The King and I, my Lords, now that all traitors
Against our royal state have lost the heads
Wherewith they plotted in their treasonous malice,
Have talk'd together, and are well agreed
That those old statutes touching Lollardism
To bring the heretic to the stake, should be
No longer a dead letter, but requicken'd.

ONE OF THE COUNCIL. Why, what hath fluster'd Gardiner? how he rubs
His forelock!

PAGET. I have changed a word with him
In coming, and may change a word again.

GARDINER. Madam, your Highness is our sun, the King
And you together our two suns in one;
And so the beams of both may shine upon us,
The faith that seem'd to droop will feel your light,
Lift head, and flourish; yet not light alone,
There must be heat—there must be heat enough
To scorch and wither heresy to the root.
For what saith Christ? 'Compel them to come in.'

And what saith Paul? 'I would they were cut off
That trouble you.' Let the dead letter live!
Trace it in fire, that all the louts to whom
Their A B C is darkness, clowns and grooms
May read it! so you quash rebellion too,
For heretic and traitor are all one:
Two vipers of one breed—an amphisbæna,
Each end a sting: Let the dead letter burn!

PAGET. Yet there be some disloyal Catholics,
And many heretics loyal; heretic throats
Cried no God-bless-her to the Lady Jane,
But shouted in Queen Mary. So there be
Some traitor-heretic, there is axe and cord.
To take the lives of others that are loyal,
And by the churchman's pitiless doom of fire,
Were but a thankless policy in the crown,
Ay, and against itself; for there are many.

MARY. If we could burn out heresy, my Lord Paget,
We reck not tho' we lost this crown of England—
Ay! tho' it were ten Englands!

GARDINER. Right, your Grace.
Paget, you are all for this poor life of ours,
And care but little for the life to be.

PAGET. I have some time, for curiousness, my Lord,
Watch'd children playing at *their* life to be,

And cruel at it, killing helpless flies;
Such is our time—all times for aught I know.

GARDINER. We kill the heretics that sting the soul—
They, with right reason, flies that prick the flesh.

PAGET. They had not reach'd right reason; little children!
They kill'd but for their pleasure and the power
They felt in killing.

GARDINER. A spice of Satan, ha!
Why, good! what then? granted!—we are fallen creatures;
Look to your Bible, Paget! we are fallen.

PAGET. I am but of the laity, my Lord Bishop,
And may not read your Bible, yet I found
One day, a wholesome scripture, 'Little children,
Love one another.'

GARDINER. Did you find a scripture,
'I come not to bring peace but a sword'? The sword
Is in her Grace's hand to smite with. Paget,
You stand up here to fight for heresy,
You are more than guess'd at as a heretic,
And on the steep-up track of the true faith
Your lapses are far seen.

PAGET. The faultless Gardiner!

MARY. You brawl beyond the question; speak, Lord Legate!

POLE. Indeed, I cannot follow with your Grace:
Rather would say—the shepherd doth not kill
The sheep that wander from his flock, but send
His careful dog to bring them to the fold.
Look to the Netherlands, wherein have been
Such holocausts of heresy! to what end?
For yet the faith is not established there.

GARDINER. The end's not come.

POLE. No—nor this way will come,
Seeing there lie two ways to every end,
A better and a worse—the worse is here
To persecute, because to persecute
Makes a faith hated, and is furthermore
No perfect witness of a perfect faith
In him who persecutes: when men are tost
On tides of strange opinion, and not sure
Of their own selves, they are wroth with their own selves,
And thence with others; then, who lights the faggot?
Not the full faith, no, but the lurking doubt.
Old Rome, that first made martyrs in the Church,
Trembled for her own gods, for these were trembling—
But when did our Rome tremble?

PAGET. Did she not
In Henry's time and Edward's?

POLE. What, my Lord!
The Church on Peter's rock? never! I have seen

A pine in Italy that cast its shadow
Athwart a cataract; firm stood the pine—
The cataract shook the shadow. To my mind,
The cataract typed the headlong plunge and fall
Of heresy to the pit: the pine was Rome.
You see, my Lords,
It was the shadow of the Church that trembled;
Your church was but the shadow of a church,
Wanting the Papal mitre.

GARDINER (*muttering*). Here be tropes.

POLE. And tropes are good to clothe a naked truth,
And make it look more seemly.

GARDINER. Tropes again!

POLE. You are hard to please. Then without tropes, my Lord,
An overmuch severeness, I repeat,
When faith is wavering makes the waverer pass
Into more settled hatred of the doctrines
Of those who rule, which hatred by and by
Involves the ruler (thus there springs to light
That Centaur of a monstrous Commonweal,
The traitor-heretic) then tho' some may quail,
Yet others are that dare the stake and fire,
And their strong torment bravely borne, begets
An admiration and an indignation,
And hot desire to imitate; so the plague

Of schism spreads; were there but three or four
Of these misleaders, yet I would not say
Burn! and we cannot burn whole towns; they are many,
As my Lord Paget says.

GARDINER. Yet my Lord Cardinal—

POLE. I am your Legate; please you let me finish.
Methinks that under our Queen's regimen
We might go softlier than with crimson rowel
And streaming lash. When Herod-Henry first
Began to batter at your English Church,
This was the cause, and hence the judgment on her.
She seethed with such adulteries, and the lives
Of many among your churchmen were so foul
That heaven wept and earth blush'd. I would advise
That we should thoroughly cleanse the Church within
Before these bitter statutes be requicken'd.
So after that when she once more is seen
White as the light, the spotless bride of Christ,
Like Christ himself on Tabor, possibly
The Lutheran may be won to her again;
Till when, my Lords, I counsel tolerance.

GARDINER. What, if a mad dog bit your hand, my Lord,
Would you not chop the bitten finger off,
Lest your whole body should madden with the poison?
I would not, were I Queen, tolerate the heretic,

No, not an hour. The ruler of a land
Is bounden by his power and place to see
His people be not poison'd. Tolerate them!
Why? do they tolerate you? Nay, many of them
Would burn—have burnt each other; call they not
The one true faith, a loathsome idol-worship?
Beware, Lord Legate, of a heavier crime
Than heresy is itself; beware, I say,
Lest men accuse you of indifference
To all faiths, all religion; for you know
Right well that you yourself have been supposed
Tainted with Lutheranism in Italy.

POLE (*angered*). But you, my Lord, beyond all supposition,
In clear and open day were congruent
With that vile Cranmer in the accursed lie
Of good Queen Catharine's divorce—the spring
Of all those evils that have flow'd upon us;
For you yourself have truckled to the tyrant,
And done your best to bastardise our Queen,
For which God's righteous judgment fell upon you
In your five years of imprisonment, my Lord,
Under young Edward. Who so bolster'd up
The gross King's headship of the Church, or more
Denied the Holy Father!

GARDINER. Ha! what! eh?
But you, my Lord, a polish'd gentleman,

A bookman, flying from the heat and tussle,
You lived among your vines and oranges,
In your soft Italy yonder! You were sent for,
You were appeal'd to, but you still preferr'd
Your learned leisure. As for what I did
I suffer'd and repented. You, Lord Legate
And Cardinal-Deacon, have not now to learn
That ev'n St. Peter in his time of fear
Denied his Master, ay, and thrice, my Lord.

POLE. But not for five-and-twenty years, my Lord.

GARDINER. Ha! good! it seems then I was summon'd hither
But to be mock'd and baited. Speak, friend Bonner,
And tell this learned Legate he lacks zeal.
The Church's evil is not as the King's,
Cannot be heal'd by stroking. The mad bite
Must have the cautery—tell him—and at once.
What would'st thou do hadst thou his power, thou
That layest so long in heretic bonds with me;
Would'st thou not burn and blast them root and branch?

BONNER. Ay, after you, my Lord.

GARDINER. Nay, God's passion, before me! speak!

BONNER. I am on fire until I see them flame.

GARDINER. Ay, the psalm-singing weavers, cobblers, scum—
But this most noble prince Plantagenet,

Our good Queen's cousin—dallying over seas
Even when his brother's, nay, his noble mother's,
Head fell—

POLE. Peace, madman!
Thou stirrest up a grief thou canst not fathom.
Thou Christian Bishop, thou Lord Chancellor
Of England! no more rein upon thine anger
Than any child! Thou mak'st me much ashamed
That I was for a moment wroth at thee.

MARY. I came for counsel and ye give me feuds,
Like dogs that set to watch their master's gate,
Fall, when the thief is ev'n within the walls,
To worrying one another. My Lord Chancellor,
You have an old trick of offending us;
And but that you are art and part with us
In purging heresy, well we might, for this
Your violence and much roughness to the Legate,
Have shut you from our counsels. Cousin Pole,
You are fresh from brighter lands. Retire with me.
His Highness and myself (so you allow us)
Will let you learn in peace and privacy
What power this cooler sun of England hath
In breeding godless vermin. And pray Heaven
That you may see according to our sight.
Come, cousin. [*Exeunt* QUEEN *and* POLE, *etc.*

GARDINER. Pole has the Plantagenet face,
But not the force made them our mightiest kings.

Fine eyes—but melancholy, irresolute—
A fine beard, Bonner, a very full fine beard.
But a weak mouth, an indeterminate—ha?

BONNER. Well, a weak mouth, perchance.

GARDINER. And not like thine
To gorge a heretic whole, roasted or raw.

BONNER. I'd do my best, my Lord; but yet the Legate
Is here as Pope and Master of the Church,
And if he go not with you—

GARDINER. Tut, Master Bishop,
Our bashful Legate, saw'st not how he flush'd?
Touch him upon his old heretical talk,
He'll burn a diocese to prove his orthodoxy.
And let him call me truckler. In those times,
Thou knowest we had to dodge, or duck, or die;
I kept my head for use of Holy Church;
And see you, we shall have to dodge again,
And let the Pope trample our rights, and plunge
His foreign fist into our island Church
To plump the leaner pouch of Italy.
For a time, for a time.
Why? that these statutes may be put in force,
And that his fan may thoroughly purge his floor.

BONNER. So then you hold the Pope—

GARDINER. I hold the Pope!
What do I hold him? what do I hold the Pope?

Come, come, the morsel stuck—this Cardinal's fault—
I have gulpt it down. I am wholly for the Pope,
Utterly and altogether for the Pope,
The Eternal Peter of the changeless chair,
Crown'd slave of slaves, and mitred king of kings,
God upon earth! what more? what would you have?
Hence, let's be gone.

Enter USHER.

USHER. Well that you be not gone,
My Lord. The Queen, most wroth at first with you,
Is now content to grant you full forgiveness,
So that you crave full pardon of the Legate.
I am sent to fetch you.

GARDINER. Doth Pole yield, sir, ha!
Did you hear 'em? were you by?

USHER. I cannot tell you,
His bearing is so courtly-delicate;
And yet methinks he falters: their two Graces
Do so dear-cousin and royal-cousin him,
So press on him the duty which as Legate
He owes himself, and with such royal smiles—

GARDINER. Smiles that burn men. Bonner, it will be carried.
He falters, ha? 'fore God, we change and change;

Men now are bow'd and old, the doctors tell you
At three-score years; then if we change at all
We needs must do it quickly; it is an age
Of brief life, and brief purpose, and brief patience,
As I have shown to-day. I am sorry for it
If Pole be like to turn. Our old friend Cranmer,
Your more especial love, hath turn'd so often,
He knows not where he stands, which, if this pass,
We two shall have to teach him; let 'em look to it,
Cranmer and Hooper, Ridley and Latimer,
Rogers and Ferrar, for their time is come,
Their hour is hard at hand, their 'dies Iræ,'
Their 'dies Illa,' which will test their sect.
I feel it but a duty—you will find in it
Pleasure as well as duty, worthy Bonner,—
To test their sect. Sir, I attend the Queen
To crave most humble pardon—of her most
Royal, Infallible, Papal Legate-cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—WOODSTOCK.

ELIZABETH, LADY IN WAITING.

ELIZABETH. So they have sent poor Courtenay over sea.

LADY. And banish'd us to Woodstock, and the fields.

The colours of our Queen are green and white,
These fields are only green, they make me gape.

ELIZABETH. There's whitethorn, girl.

LADY. Ay, for an hour in May.
But court is always May, buds out in masques,
Breaks into feather'd merriments, and flowers
In silken pageants. Why do they keep us here?
Why still suspect your Grace?

ELIZABETH. Hard upon both.

[*Writes on the window with a diamond.*

Much suspected, of me
Nothing proven can be,
Quoth Elizabeth, prisoner.

LADY. What hath your Highness written?

ELIZABETH. A true rhyme.

LADY. Cut with a diamond; so to last like truth.

ELIZABETH. Ay, if truth last.

LADY. But truth, they say, will out,
So it must last. It is not like a word,
That comes and goes in uttering.

ELIZABETH. Truth, a word!
The very Truth and very Word are one.
But truth of story, which I glanced at, girl,
Is like a word that comes from olden days,
And passes thro' the peoples: every tongue
Alters it passing, till it spells and speaks
Quite other than at first.

LADY. I do not follow.

ELIZABETH. How many names in the long sweep of time
That so foreshortens greatness, may but hang
On the chance mention of some fool that once
Brake bread with us, perhaps: and my poor chronicle
Is but of glass. Sir Henry Bedingfield
May split it for a spite.

LADY. God grant it last,
And witness to your Grace's innocence,
Till doomsday melt it.

ELIZABETH. Or a second fire,
Like that which lately crackled underfoot
And in this very chamber, fuse the glass,
And char us back again into the dust
We spring from. Never peacock against rain
Scream'd as you did for water.

LADY. And I got it.
I woke Sir Henry—and he's true to you—
I read his honest horror in his eyes.

ELIZABETH. Or true to you?

LADY. Sir Henry Bedingfield!
I will have no man true to me, your Grace,
But one that pares his nails; to me? the clown!

ELIZABETH. Out, girl! you wrong a noble gentleman.

LADY. For, like his cloak, his manners want the nap
And gloss of court; but of this fire he says,
Nay swears, it was no wicked wilfulness,
Only a natural chance.

ELIZABETH. A chance—perchance
One of those wicked wilfuls that men make,
Nor shame to call it nature. Nay, I know
They hunt my blood. Save for my daily range
Among the pleasant fields of Holy Writ
I might despair. But there hath some one come;
The house is all in movement. Hence, and see.

[*Exit* LADY.

MILKMAID (*singing without*).

Shame upon you, Robin,
Shame upon you now!
Kiss me would you? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Daisies grow again,
Kingcups blow again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Robin came behind me,
Kiss'd me well I vow;
Cuff him could I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Swallows fly again,
Cuckoos cry again,
And you came and kiss'd me milking the cow.

Come, Robin, Robin,
Come and kiss me now;
Help it can I? with my hands
Milking the cow?
Ringdoves coo again,
All things woo again.
Come behind and kiss me milking the cow!

ELIZABETH. Right honest and red-cheek'd; Robin was violent,
And she was crafty—a sweet violence,
And a sweet craft. I would I were a milkmaid,
To sing, love, marry, churn, brew, bake, and die,
Then have my simple headstone by the church,
And all things lived and ended honestly.
I could not if I would. I am Harry's daughter:
Gardiner would have my head. They are not sweet,
The violence and the craft that do divide
The world of nature; what is weak must lie;
The lion needs but roar to guard his young;
The lapwing lies, says 'here' when they are there.
Threaten the child; 'I'll scourge you if you did it:'
What weapon hath the child, save his soft tongue,
To say 'I did not'? and my rod's the block.
I never lay my head upon the pillow
But that I think, 'Wilt thou lie there to-morrow?'
How oft the falling axe, that never fell,
Hath shock'd me back into the daylight truth
That it may fall to-day! Those damp, black, dead

Nights in the Tower; dead—with the fear of death
Too dead ev'n for a death-watch! Toll of a bell,
Stroke of a clock, the scurrying of a rat
Affrighted me, and then delighted me,
For there was life—And there was life in death—
The little murder'd princes, in a pale light,
Rose hand in hand, and whisper'd, 'come away!
The civil wars are gone for evermore:
Thou last of all the Tudors, come away!
With us is peace!' The last? It was a dream;
I must not dream, not wink, but watch. She has gone,
Maid Marian to her Robin—by and by
Both happy! a fox may filch a hen by night,
And make a morning outcry in the yard;
But there's no Renard here to 'catch her tripping.'
Catch me who can; yet, sometime I have wish'd
That I were caught, and kill'd away at once
Out of the flutter. The gray rogue, Gardiner,
Went on his knees, and pray'd me to confess
In Wyatt's business, and to cast myself
Upon the good Queen's mercy; ay, when, my Lord?
God save the Queen! My jailor—

Enter SIR HENRY BEDINGFIELD.

BEDINGFIELD. One, whose bolts,
That jail you from free life, bar you from death.

There haunt some Papist ruffians hereabout
Would murder you.

ELIZABETH. I thank you heartily, sir,
But I am royal, tho' your prisoner,
And God hath blest or cursed me with a nose—
Your boots are from the horses.

BEDINGFIELD. Ay, my Lady.
When next there comes a missive from the Queen
It shall be all my study for one hour
To rose and lavender my horsiness,
Before I dare to glance upon your Grace.

ELIZABETH. A missive from the Queen: last time she wrote,
I had like to have lost my life: it takes my breath:
O God, sir, do you look upon your boots,
Are you so small a man? Help me: what think you,
Is it life or death?

BEDINGFIELD. I thought not on my boots;
The devil take all boots were ever made
Since man went barefoot. See, I lay it here,
For I will come no nearer to your Grace;
[*Laying down the letter.*
And, whether it bring you bitter news or sweet,
And God hath given your Grace a nose, or not,
I'll help you, if I may.

ELIZABETH. Your pardon, then;
It is the heat and narrowness of the cage

That makes the captive testy; with free wing
The world were all one Araby. Leave me now,
Will you, companion to myself, sir?

BEDINGFIELD. Will I?

With most exceeding willingness, I will;
You know I never come till I be call'd. [*Exit.*

ELIZABETH. It lies there folded: is there venom in it?
A snake—and if I touch it, it may sting.
Come, come, the worst!
Best wisdom is to know the worst at once. [*Reads:*

'It is the King's wish, that you should wed Prince Philibert of Savoy. You are to come to Court on the instant; and think of this in your coming.

'MARY THE QUEEN.'

Think! I have many thoughts;
I think there may be birdlime here for me;
I think they fain would have me from the realm;
I think the Queen may never bear a child;
I think that I may be some time the Queen,
Then, Queen indeed: no foreign prince or priest
Should fill my throne, myself upon the steps.
I think I will not marry anyone,
Specially not this landless Philibert
Of Savoy; but, if Philip menace me,
I think that I will play with Philibert,—

As once the Holy Father did with mine,
Before my father married my good mother,—
For fear of Spain.

Enter LADY.

LADY. O Lord! your Grace, your Grace,
I feel so happy: it seems that we shall fly
These bald, blank fields, and dance into the sun
That shines on princes.

ELIZABETH. Yet, a moment since,
I wish'd myself the milkmaid singing here,
To kiss and cuff among the birds and flowers—
A right rough life and healthful.

LADY. But the wench
Hath her own troubles; she is weeping now;
For the wrong Robin took her at her word.
Then the cow kick'd, and all her milk was spilt.
Your Highness such a milkmaid?

ELIZABETH. I had kept
My Robins and my cows in sweeter order
Had I been such.

LADY (*slyly*). And had your Grace a Robin?

ELIZABETH. Come, come, you are chill here; you want the sun
That shines at court; make ready for the journey.
Pray God, we 'scape the sunstroke. Ready at once.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

LORD PETRE *and* LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

PETRE. You cannot see the Queen. Renard denied her,
Ev'n now to me.

HOWARD. Their Flemish go-between
And all-in-all. I came to thank her Majesty
For freeing my friend Bagenhall from the Tower;
A grace to me! Mercy, that herb-of-grace,
Flowers now but seldom.

PETRE. Only now perhaps,
Because the Queen hath been three days in tears
For Philip's going—like the wild hedge-rose
Of a soft winter, possible, not probable,
However you have prov'n it.

HOWARD. I must see her.

Enter RENARD.

RENARD. My Lords, you cannot see her Majesty.

HOWARD. Why then the King! for I would have him bring it
Home to the leisure wisdom of his Queen,
Before he go, that since these statutes past,
Gardiner out-Gardiners Gardiner in his heat,

Bonner cannot out-Bonner his own self—
Beast!—but they play with fire as children do,
And burn the house. I know that these are breeding
A fierce resolve and fixt heart-hate in men
Against the King, the Queen, the Holy Father,
The faith itself. Can I not see him?

RENARD. Not now.

And in all this, my Lord, her Majesty
Is flint of flint, you may strike fire from her,
Not hope to melt her. I will give your message.

[*Exeunt* PETRE *and* HOWARD.

Enter PHILIP (*musing*).

PHILIP. She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy,
I talk'd with her in vain—says she will live
And die true maid—a goodly creature too.
Would *she* had been the Queen! yet she must have him;
She troubles England: that she breathes in England
Is life and lungs to every rebel birth
That passes out of embryo.
Simon Renard!—
This Howard, whom they fear, what was he saying?

RENARD. What your imperial father said, my liege,

To deal with heresy gentlier. Gardiner burns,
And Bonner burns; and it would seem this people
Care more for our brief life in their wet land,
Than yours in happier Spain. I told my Lord
He should not vex her Highness; she would say
These are the means God works with, that His church
May flourish.

PHILIP. Ay, sir, but in statesmanship
To strike too soon is oft to miss the blow.
Thou knowest I bad my chaplain, Castro, preach
Against these burnings.

RENARD. And the Emperor
Approved you, and when last he wrote, declared
His comfort in your Grace that you were bland
And affable to men of all estates,
In hope to charm them from their hate of Spain.

PHILIP. In hope to crush all heresy under Spain.
But, Renard, I am sicker staying here
Than any sea could make me passing hence,
Tho' I be ever deadly sick at sea.
So sick am I with biding for this child.
Is it the fashion in this clime for women
To go twelve months in bearing of a child?
The nurses yawn'd, the cradle gaped, they led
Processions, chanted litanies, clash'd their bells,
Shot off their lying cannon, and her priests
Have preach'd, the fools, of this fair prince to come;

Till, by St. James, I find myself the fool.
Why do you lift your eyebrow at me thus?

RENARD. I never saw your Highness moved till now.

PHILIP. So weary am I of this wet land of theirs,
And every soul of man that breathes therein.

RENARD. My liege, we must not drop the mask before
The masquerade is over—

PHILIP. —Have I dropt it?
I have but shown a loathing face to you,
Who knew it from the first.

Enter MARY.

MARY (*aside*). With Renard. Still
Parleying with Renard, all the day with Renard,
And scarce a greeting all the day for me—
And goes to-morrow. [*Exit* MARY.

PHILIP (*to* RENARD, *who advances to him*). Well, sir, is there more?

RENARD (*who has perceived the* QUEEN). May Simon Renard speak a single word?

PHILIP. Ay.

RENARD. And be forgiven for it?

PHILIP. Simon Renard

Knows me too well to speak a single word
That could not be forgiven.

RENARD. Well, my liege,
Your Grace hath a most chaste and loving wife.

PHILIP. Why not? The Queen of Philip should be chaste.

RENARD. Ay, but, my Lord, you know what Virgil sings,
Woman is various and most mutable.

PHILIP. She play the harlot! never.

RENARD. No, sire, no,
Not dream'd of by the rabidest gospeller.
There was a paper thrown into the palace,
'The King hath wearied of his barren bride.'
She came upon it, read it, and then rent it,
With all the rage of one who hates a truth
He cannot but allow. Sire, I would have you—
What should I say, I cannot pick my words—
Be somewhat less—majestic to your Queen.

PHILIP. Am I to change my manners, Simon Renard,
Because these islanders are brutal beasts?
Or would you have me turn a sonneteer,
And warble those brief-sighted eyes of hers?

RENARD. Brief-sighted tho' they be, I have seen them, sire,
When you perchance were trifling royally

With some fair dame of court, suddenly fill
With such fierce fire—had it been fire indeed
It would have burnt both speakers.

PHILIP. Ay, and then?

RENARD. Sire, might it not be policy in some matter
Of small importance now and then to cede
A point to her demand?

PHILIP. Well, I am going.

RENARD. For should her love when you are gone, my liege,
Witness these papers, there will not be wanting
Those that will urge her injury—should her love—
And I have known such women more than one—
Veer to the counterpoint, and jealousy
Hath in it an alchemic force to fuse
Almost into one metal love and hate,—
And she impress her wrongs upon her Council,
And these again upon her Parliament—
We are not loved here, and would be then perhaps
Not so well holpen in our wars with France,
As else we might be—here she comes.

Enter MARY.

MARY. O Philip!
Nay, must you go indeed?

PHILIP. Madam, I must.

MARY. The parting of a husband and a wife
Is like the cleaving of a heart; one half
Will flutter here, one there.

PHILIP. You say true, Madam.

MARY. The Holy Virgin will not have me yet
Lose the sweet hope that I may bear a prince.
If such a prince were born and you not here!

PHILIP. I should be here if such a prince were born.

MARY. But must you go?

PHILIP. Madam, you know my father,
Retiring into cloistral solitude
To yield the remnant of his years to heaven,
Will shift the yoke and weight of all the world
From off his neck to mine. We meet at Brussels.
But since mine absence will not be for long,
Your Majesty shall go to Dover with me,
And wait my coming back.

MARY. To Dover? no,
I am too feeble. I will go to Greenwich,
So you will have me with you; and there watch
All that is gracious in the breath of heaven
Draw with your sails from our poor land, and pass
And leave me, Philip, with my prayers for you.

PHILIP. And doubtless I shall profit by your prayers.

MARY. Methinks that would you tarry one day more

(The news was sudden) I could mould myself
To bear your going better; will you do it?

PHILIP. Madam, a day may sink or save a realm.

MARY. A day may save a heart from breaking too.

PHILIP. Well, Simon Renard, shall we stop a day?

RENARD. Your Grace's business will not suffer, sire,
For one day more, so far as I can tell.

PHILIP. Then one day more to please her Majesty.

MARY. The sunshine sweeps across my life again.
O if I knew you felt this parting, Philip,
As I do!

PHILIP. By St. James I do protest,
Upon the faith and honour of a Spaniard,
I am vastly grieved to leave your Majesty.
Simon, is supper ready?

RENARD. Ay, my liege,
I saw the covers laying.

PHILIP. Let us have it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—A Room in the Palace.

MARY, CARDINAL POLE.

MARY. What have you there?

POLE. So please your Majesty,
A long petition from the foreign exiles
To spare the life of Cranmer. Bishop Thirlby,
And my Lord Paget and Lord William Howard,
Crave, in the same cause, hearing of your Grace.
Hath he not written himself—infatuated—
To sue you for his life?

MARY. His life? Oh, no;
Not sued for that—he knows it were in vain.
But so much of the anti-papal leaven
Works in him yet, he hath pray'd me not to sully
Mine own prerogative, and degrade the realm
By seeking justice at a stranger's hand
Against my natural subject. King and Queen,
To whom he owes his loyalty after God,
Shall these accuse him to a foreign prince?

Death would not grieve him more. I cannot be
True to this realm of England and the Pope
Together, says the heretic.

POLE. And there errs;
As he hath ever err'd thro' vanity.
A secular kingdom is but as the body
Lacking a soul; and in itself a beast.
The Holy Father in a secular kingdom
Is as the soul descending out of heaven
Into a body generate.

MARY. Write to him, then.

POLE. I will.

MARY. And sharply, Pole.

POLE. Here come the Cranmerites!

Enter THIRLBY, LORD PAGET, LORD WILLIAM HOWARD.

HOWARD. Health to your Grace! Good morrow, my Lord Cardinal;
We make our humble prayer unto your Grace
That Cranmer may withdraw to foreign parts,
Or into private life within the realm.
In several bills and declarations, Madam,
He hath recanted all his heresies.

PAGET. Ay, ay; if Bonner have not forged the bills. [*Aside.*

MARY. Did not More die, and Fisher? he must burn.

HOWARD. He hath recanted, Madam.

MARY. The better for him.
He burns in Purgatory, not in Hell.

HOWARD. Ay, ay, your Grace; but it was never seen
That any one recanting thus at full,
As Cranmer hath, came to the fire on earth.

MARY. It will be seen now, then.

THIRLBY. O Madam, Madam!
I thus implore you, low upon my knees,
To reach the hand of mercy to my friend.
I have err'd with him; with him I have recanted.
What human reason is there why my friend
Should meet with lesser mercy than myself?

MARY. My Lord of Ely, this. After a riot
We hang the leaders, let their following go.
Cranmer is head and father of these heresies,
New learning as they call it; yea, may God
Forget me at most need when I forget
Her foul divorce—my sainted mother—No!—

HOWARD. Ay. ay, but mighty doctors doubted there.
The Pope himself waver'd; and more than one
Row'd in that galley—Gardiner to wit,
Whom truly I deny not to have been
Your faithful friend and trusty councillor.
Hath not your Highness ever read his book,

His tractate upon True Obedience,
Writ by himself and Bonner?
MARY. I will take
Such order with all bad, heretical books
That none shall hold them in his house and live,
Henceforward. No, my Lord.
HOWARD. Then never read it.
The truth is here. Your father was a man
Of such colossal kinghood, yet so courteous,
Except when wroth, you scarce could meet his eye
And hold your own; and were he wroth indeed,
You held it less, or not at all. I say,
Your father had a will that beat men down;
Your father had a brain that beat men down—
POLE. Not me, my Lord.
HOWARD. No, for you were not here;
You sit upon this fallen Cranmer's throne;
And it would more become you, my Lord Legate,
To join a voice, so potent with her Highness,
To ours in plea for Cranmer than to stand
On naked self-assertion.
MARY. All your voices
Are waves on flint. The heretic must burn.
HOWARD. Yet once he saved your Majesty's own life;
Stood out against the King in your behalf,
At his own peril.

MARY. I know not if he did;
And if he did I care not, my Lord Howard.
My life is not so happy, no such boon,
That I should spare to take a heretic priest's,
Who saved it or not saved. Why do you vex me?

PAGET. Yet to save Cranmer were to serve the Church,
Your Majesty's I mean; he is effaced,
Self-blotted out; so wounded in his honour,
He can but creep down into some dark hole
Like a hurt beast, and hide himself and die;
But if you burn him,—well, your Highness knows
The saying, 'Martyr's blood—seed of the Church.'

MARY. Of the true Church; but his is none, nor will be.
You are too politic for me, my Lord Paget.
And if he have to live so loath'd a life,
It were more merciful to burn him now.

THIRLBY. O yet relent. O, Madam, if you knew him
As I do, ever gentle, and so gracious,
With all his learning—

MARY. Yet a heretic still.
His learning makes his burning the more just.

THIRLEY. So worshipt of all those that came across him;
The stranger at his hearth, and all his house—

MARY. His children and his concubine, belike.

THIRLBY. To do him any wrong was to beget
A kindness from him, for his heart was rich,
Of such fine mould, that if you sow'd therein
The seed of Hate, it blossom'd Charity.

POLE. 'After his kind it costs him nothing,' there's
An old world English adage to the point.
These are but natural graces, my good Bishop,
Which in the Catholic garden are as flowers,
But on the heretic dunghill only weeds.

HOWARD. Such weeds make dunghills gracious.

MARY. Enough, my Lords.
It is God's will, the Holy Father's will,
And Philip's will, and mine, that he should burn.
He is pronounced anathema.

HOWARD. Farewell, Madam,
God grant you ampler mercy at your call
Than you have shown to Cranmer. [*Exeunt* LORDS.

POLE. After this,
Your Grace will hardly care to overlook
This same petition of the foreign exiles
For Cranmer's life.

MARY. Make out the writ to-night.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—OXFORD. CRANMER IN PRISON.

CRANMER. Last night, I dream'd the faggots were alight,
And that myself was fasten'd to the stake,
And found it all a visionary flame,
Cool as the light in old decaying wood;
And then King Harry look'd from out a cloud,
And bad me have good courage; and I heard
An angel cry 'There is more joy in Heaven,'—
And after that, the trumpet of the dead.
[*Trumpets without.*
Why, there are trumpets blowing now: what is it?

Enter FATHER COLE.

COLE. Cranmer. I come to question you again;
Have you remain'd in the true Catholic faith
I left you in?

CRANMER. In the true Catholic faith,
By Heaven's grace, I am more and more confirm'd.
Why are the trumpets blowing, Father Cole?

COLE. Cranmer, it is decided by the Council
That you to-day should read your recantation
Before the people in St. Mary's Church.
And there be many heretics in the town,
Who loathe you for your late return to Rome,

And might assail you passing through the street,
And tear you piecemeal: so you have a guard.

CRANMER. Or seek to rescue me. I thank the Council.

COLE. Do you lack any money?

CRANMER. Nay, why should I?
The prison fare is good enough for me.

COLE. Ay, but to give the poor.

CRANMER. Hand it me, then!
I thank you.

COLE. For a little space, farewell;
Until I see you in St. Mary's Church. [*Exit* COLE.

CRANMER. It is against all precedent to burn
One who recants; they mean to pardon me.
To give the poor—they give the poor who die.
Well, burn me or not burn me I am fixt;
It is but a communion, not a mass:
A holy supper, not a sacrifice;
No man can make his Maker—Villa Garcia.

Enter VILLA GARCIA.

VILLA GARCIA. Pray you write out this paper for me, Cranmer.

CRANMER. Have I not writ enough to satisfy you?

VILLA GARCIA. It is the last.

CRANMER. Give it me, then.

[*He writes.*

VILLA GARCIA. Now sign.

CRANMER. I have sign'd enough, and I will sign no more.

VILLA GARCIA. It is no more than what you have sign'd already,
The public form thereof.

CRANMER. It may be so;
I sign it with my presence, if I read it.

VILLA GARCIA. But this is idle of you. Well, sir, well,
You are to beg the people to pray for you;
Exhort them to a pure and virtuous life;
Declare the Queen's right to the throne; confess
Your faith before all hearers; and retract
That Eucharistic doctrine in your book.
Will you not sign it now?

CRANMER. No, Villa Garcia,
I sign no more. Will they have mercy on me?

VILLA GARCIA. Have you good hopes of mercy! So, farewell. [*Exit.*

CRANMER. Good hopes, not theirs, have I that I am fixt,
Fixt beyond fall; however, in strange hours,
After the long brain-dazing colloquies,
And thousand-times recurring argument

Of those two friars ever in my prison,
When left alone in my despondency,
Without a friend, a book, my faith would seem
Dead or half-drown'd, or else swam heavily
Against the huge corruptions of the Church,
Monsters of mistradition, old enough
To scare me into dreaming, 'what am I,
Cranmer, against whole ages?' was it so,
Or am I slandering my most inward friend,
To veil the fault of my most outward foe—
The soft and tremulous coward in the flesh?
O higher, holier, earlier, purer church,
I have found thee and not leave thee any more.
It is but a communion, not a mass—
No sacrifice, but a life-giving feast!
(*Writes.*) So, so; this will I say—thus will I pray.
[*Puts up the paper.*

Enter BONNER.

BONNER. Good day, old friend; what, you look somewhat worn;
And yet it is a day to test your health
Ev'n at the best: I scarce have spoken with you
Since when?—your degradation. At your trial
Never stood up a bolder man than you;
You would not cap the Pope's commissioner—

Your learning, and your stoutness, and your heresy,
Dumbfounded half of us. So, after that,
We had to dis-archbishop and unlord,
And make you simple Cranmer once again.
The common barber clipt your hair, and I
Scraped from your finger-points the holy oil;
And worse than all, you had to kneel to *me;*
Which was not pleasant for you, Master Cranmer.
Now you, that would not recognise the Pope,
And you, that would not own the Real Presence,
Have found a real presence in the stake,
Which frights you back into the ancient faith;
And so you have recanted to the Pope.
How are the mighty fallen, Master Cranmer!

CRANMER. You have been more fierce against the Pope than I;
But why fling back the stone he strikes me with?
[*Aside.*
O Bonner, if I ever did you kindness—
Power hath been given you to try faith by fire—
Pray you, remembering how yourself have changed,
Be somewhat pitiful, after I have gone,
To the poor flock—to women and to children—
That when I was archbishop held with me.

BONNER. Ay—gentle as they call you—live or die!
Pitiful to this pitiful heresy?

I must obey the Queen and Council, man.
Win thro' this day with honour to yourself,
And I'll say something for you—so—good-bye. [*Exit.*

CRANMER. This hard coarse man of old hath crouch'd to me
Till I myself was half ashamed for him.

Enter THIRLBY.

Weep not, good Thirlby.

THIRLBY. Oh, my Lord, my Lord!
My heart is no such block as Bonner's is:
Who would not weep?

CRANMER. Why do you so my-lord me,
Who am disgraced?

THIRLBY. On earth; but saved in heaven
By your recanting.

CRANMER. Will they burn me, Thirlby?

THIRLBY. Alas, they will; these burnings will not help
The purpose of the faith; but my poor voice
Against them is a whisper to the roar
Of a spring-tide.

CRANMER. And they will surely burn me?

THIRLBY. Ay; and besides, will have you in the church
Repeat your recantation in the ears

Of all men, to the saving of their souls,
Before your execution. May God help you
Thro' that hard hour!

CRANMER. And may God bless you, Thirlby!
Well, they shall hear my recantation there.

[*Exit* THIRLBY.

Disgraced, dishonour'd!—not by them, indeed,
By mine own self—by mine own hand!
O thin-skinn'd hand and jutting veins, 'twas you
That sign'd the burning of poor Joan of Kent;
But then she was a witch. You have written much,
But you were never raised to plead for Frith,
Whose dogmas I have reach'd: he was deliver'd
To the secular arm to burn; and there was Lambert;
Who can foresee himself? truly these burnings,
As Thirlby says, are profitless to the burners,
And help the other side. You shall burn too,
Burn first when I am burnt.
Fire—inch by inch to die in agony! Latimer
Had a brief end—not Ridley. Hooper burn'd
Three-quarters of an hour. Will my faggots
Be wet as his were? It is a day of rain.
I will not muse upon it.
My fancy takes the burner's part, and makes
The fire seem even crueller than it is.
No, I not doubt that God will give me strength,
Albeit I have denied him.

Enter SOTO *and* VILLA GARCIA.

VILLA GARCIA. We are ready
To take you to St. Mary's, Master Cranmer.

CRANMER. And I: lead on; ye loose me from my bonds. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

COLE *in the Pulpit,* LORD WILLIAMS OF THAME *presiding.* LORD WILLIAM HOWARD, LORD PAGET, *and others.* CRANMER *enters between* SOTO *and* VILLA GARCIA, *and the whole Choir strike up* 'Nunc Dimittis.' CRANMER *is set upon a Scaffold before the people.*

COLE. Behold him—

[*A pause: people in the foreground.*

PEOPLE. Oh, unhappy sight!

FIRST PROTESTANT. See how the tears run down his fatherly face.

SECOND PROTESTANT. James, didst thou ever see a carrion crow
Stand watching a sick beast before he dies?

FIRST PROTESTANT. Him perch'd up there? I wish some thunderbolt
Would make this Cole a cinder, pulpit and all.

COLE. Behold him, brethren: he hath cause to weep!—
So have we all: weep with him if ye will,
Yet——
It is expedient for one man to die,
Yea, for the people, lest the people die.
Yet wherefore should he die that hath return'd
To the one Catholic Universal Church,
Repentant of his errors?

PROTESTANT *murmurs*. Ay, tell us that.

COLE. Those of the wrong side will despise the man,
Deeming him one that thro' the fear of death
Gave up his cause, except he seal his faith
In sight of all with flaming martyrdom.

CRANMER. Ay.

COLE. Ye hear him, and albeit there may seem
According to the canons pardon due
To him that so repents, yet are there causes
Wherefore our Queen and Council at this time
Adjudge him to the death. He hath been a traitor,
A shaker and confounder of the realm;
And when the King's divorce was sued at Rome,
He here, this heretic metropolitan,
As if he had been the Holy Father, sat
And judged it. Did I call him heretic?
A huge heresiarch! never was it known

That any man so writing, preaching so,
So poisoning the Church, so long continuing,
Hath found his pardon; therefore he must die,
For warning and example.
Other reasons
There be for this man's ending, which our Queen
And Council at this present deem it not
Expedient to be known.

PROTESTANT *murmurs.* I warrant you.

COLE. Take therefore, all, example by this man,
For if our Holy Queen not pardon him,
Much less shall others in like cause escape,
That all of you, the highest as the lowest,
May learn there is no power against the Lord.
There stands a man, once of so high degree,
Chief prelate of our Church, archbishop, first
In Council, second person in the realm,
Friend for so long time of a mighty King;
And now ye see downfallen and debased
From councillor to caitiff—fallen so low,
The leprous flutterings of the byway, scum
And offal of the city would not change
Estates with him; in brief, so miserable,
There is no hope of better left for him,
No place for worse.
Yet, Cranmer, be thou glad.
This is the work of God. He is glorified

In thy conversion: lo! thou art reclaim'd;
He brings thee home: nor fear but that to-day
Thou shalt receive the penitent thief's award,
And be with Christ the Lord in Paradise.
Remember how God made the fierce fire seem
To those three children like a pleasant dew.
Remember, too,
The triumph of St. Andrew on his cross,
The patience of St. Lawrence in the fire.
Thus, if thou call on God and all the saints,
God will beat down the fury of the flame,
Or give thee saintly strength to undergo.
And for thy soul shall masses here be sung
By every priest in Oxford. Pray for him.

CRANMER. Ay, one and all, dear brothers, pray for me;
Pray with one breath, one heart, one soul for me.

COLE. And now, lest anyone among you doubt
The man's conversion and remorse of heart,
Yourselves shall hear him speak. Speak, Master Cranmer,
Fulfil your promise made me, and proclaim
Your true undoubted faith, that all may hear.

CRANMER. And that I will. O God, Father of Heaven!
O Son of God, Redeemer of the world!
O Holy Ghost! proceeding from them both,

Three persons and one God, have mercy on me,
Most miserable sinner, wretched man.
I have offended against heaven and earth
More grievously than any tongue can tell.
Then whither should I flee for any help?
I am ashamed to lift my eyes to heaven,
And I can find no refuge upon earth.
Shall I despair then?—God forbid! O God,
For thou art merciful, refusing none
That come to Thee for succour, unto Thee,
Therefore, I come; humble myself to Thee;
Saying, O Lord God, although my sins be great,
For thy great mercy have mercy! O God the Son,
Not for slight faults alone, when thou becamest
Man in the Flesh, was the great mystery wrought;
O God the Father, not for little sins
Didst thou yield up thy Son to human death;
But for the greatest sin that can be sinn'd,
Yea, even such as mine, incalculable,
Unpardonable,—sin against the light,
The truth of God, which I had proven and known.
Thy mercy must be greater than all sin.
Forgive me, Father, for no merit of mine,
But that Thy name by man be glorified,
And Thy most blessed Son's, who died for man.
Good people, every man at time of death
Would fain set forth some saying that may live

After his death and better humankind;
For death gives life's last word a power to live,
And, like the stone-cut epitaph, remain
After the vanish'd voice, and speak to men.
God grant me grace to glorify my God!
And first I say it is a grievous case,
Many so dote upon this bubble world,
Whose colours in a moment break and fly,
They care for nothing else. What saith St. John:—
'Love of this world is hatred against God.'
Again, I pray you all that, next to God,
You do unmurmuringly and willingly
Obey your King and Queen, and not for dread
Of these alone, but from the fear of Him
Whose ministers they be to govern you.
Thirdly, I pray you all to live together
Like brethren; yet what hatred Christian men
Bear to each other, seeming not as brethren,
But mortal foes! But do you good to all
As much as in you lieth. Hurt no man more
Than you would harm your loving natural brother
Of the same roof, same breast. If any do,
Albeit he think himself at home with God,
Of this be sure, he is whole worlds away.

PROTESTANT *murmurs.* What sort of brothers then be those that lust
To burn each other?

WILLIAMS. Peace among you, there!

CRANMER. Fourthly, to those that own exceeding wealth,
Remember that sore saying spoken once
By Him that was the truth, 'How hard it is
For the rich man to enter into Heaven;'
Let all rich men remember that hard word.
I have not time for more: if ever, now
Let them flow forth in charity, seeing now
The poor so many, and all food so dear.
Long have I lain in prison, yet have heard
Of all their wretchedness. Give to the poor,
Ye give to God. He is with us in the poor.
And now, and forasmuch as I have come
To the last end of life, and thereupon
Hangs all my past, and all my life to be,
Either to live with Christ in Heaven with joy,
Or to be still in pain with devils in hell;
And, seeing in a moment, I shall find
[*Pointing upwards.*
Heaven or else hell ready to swallow me,
[*Pointing downwards.*
I shall declare to you my very faith
Without all colour.

COLE. Hear him, my good brethren.

CRANMER. I do believe in God, Father of all;
In every article of the Catholic faith,

And every syllable taught us by our Lord,
His prophets, and apostles, in the Testaments,
Both Old and New.

COLE. Be plainer, Master Cranmer.

CRANMER. And now I come to the great cause that weighs
Upon my conscience more than anything
Or said or done in all my life by me;
For there be writings I have set abroad
Against the truth I knew within my heart,
Written for fear of death, to save my life,
If that might be; the papers by my hand
Sign'd since my degradation—by this hand
[*Holding out his right hand.*
Written and sign'd—I here renounce them all;
And, since my hand offended, having written
Against my heart, my hand shall first be burnt,
So I may come to the fire. [*Dead silence.*

PROTESTANT *murmurs.*

FIRST PROTESTANT. I knew it would be so.

SECOND PROTESTANT. Our prayers are heard!

THIRD PROTESTANT. God bless him!

CATHOLIC *murmurs.* Out upon him! out upon him!
Liar! dissembler! traitor! to the fire!

WILLIAMS (*raising his voice*). You know that you recanted all you said

Touching the sacrament in that same book
You wrote against my Lord of Winchester;
Dissemble not; play the plain Christian man.

CRANMER. Alas, my Lord,
I have been a man loved plainness all my life;
I *did* dissemble, but the hour has come
For utter truth and plainness; wherefore, I say,
I hold by all I wrote within that book.
Moreover,
As for the Pope I count him Antichrist,
With all his devil's doctrines; and refuse,
Reject him, and abhor him. I have said.

[*Cries on all sides,* 'Pull him down! Away with him!'

COLE. Ay, stop the heretic's mouth! Hale him away!

WILLIAMS. Harm him not, harm him not! have him to the fire!

[CRANMER *goes out between Two Friars, smiling; hands are reached to him from the crowd.* LORD WILLIAM HOWARD *and* LORD PAGET *are left alone in the church.*

PAGET. The nave and aisles all empty as a fool's jest!
No, here's Lord William Howard. What, my Lord,
You have not gone to see the burning?

HOWARD. Fie!
To stand at ease, and stare as at a show,

And watch a good man burn. Never again.
I saw the deaths of Latimer and Ridley.
Moreover, tho' a Catholic, I would not,
For the pure honour of our common nature,
Hear what I might—another recantation
Of Cranmer at the stake.

PAGET. You'd not hear that.
He pass'd out smiling, and he walk'd upright;
His eye was like a soldier's, whom the general
He looks to and he leans on as his God,
Hath rated for some backwardness and bidd'n him
Charge one against a thousand, and the man
Hurls his soil'd life against the pikes and dies.

HOWARD. Yet that he might not after all those papers
Of recantation yield again, who knows?

PAGET. Papers of recantation! Think you then
That Cranmer read all papers that he sign'd?
Or sign'd all those they tell us that he sign'd?
Nay, I trow not: and you shall see, my Lord,
That howsoever hero-like the man
Dies in the fire, this Bonner or another
Will in some lying fashion misreport
His ending to the glory of their church.
And you saw Latimer and Ridley die?
Latimer was eighty, was he not? his best
Of life was over then.

HOWARD. His eighty years
Looked somewhat crooked on him in his frieze;
But after they had stript him to his shroud,
He stood upright, a lad of twenty-one,
And gather'd with his hands the starting flame,
And wash'd his hands and all his face therein,
Until the powder suddenly blew him dead.
Ridley was longer burning; but he died
As manfully and boldly, and, 'fore God,
I know them heretics, but right English ones.
If ever, as heaven grant, we clash with Spain,
Our Ridley-soldiers and our Latimer-sailors
Will teach her something.

PAGET. Your mild Legate Pole
Will tell you that the devil helpt them thro' it.

[*A murmur of the Crowd in the distance.*
Hark, how those Roman wolfdogs howl and bay him!

HOWARD. Might it not be the other side rejoicing
In his brave end?

PAGET. They are too crush'd, too broken,
They can but weep in silence.

HOWARD. Ay, ay, Paget,
They have brought it in large measure on themselves.
Have I not heard them mock the blessed Host
In songs so lewd, the beast might roar his claim
To being in God's image, more than they?
Have I not seen the gamekeeper, the groom,

Gardener, and huntsman, in the parson's place,
The parson from his own spire swung out dead,
And Ignorance crying in the streets, and all men
Regarding her? I say they have drawn the fire
On their own heads: yet, Paget, I do hold
The Catholic, if he have the greater right,
Hath been the crueller.

PAGET. Action and re-action,
The miserable see-saw of our child-world,
Make us despise it at odd hours, my Lord.
Heaven help that this re-action not re-act
Yet fiercelier under Queen Elizabeth,
So that she come to rule us.

HOWARD. The world's mad.

PAGET. My Lord, the world is like a drunken man,
Who cannot move straight to his end—but reels
Now to the right, then as far to the left,
Push'd by the crowd beside—and underfoot
An earthquake; for since Henry for a doubt—
Which a young lust had clapt upon the back,
Crying, 'Forward!'—set our old church rocking, men
Have hardly known what to believe, or whether
They should believe in anything; the currents
So shift and change, they see not how they are borne,
Nor whither. I conclude the King a beast;
Verily a lion if you will—the world
A most obedient beast and fool—myself

Half beast and fool as appertaining to it;
Altho' your Lordship hath as little of each
Cleaving to your original Adam-clay,
As may be consonant with mortality.

HOWARD. We talk and Cranmer suffers.
The kindliest man I ever knew; see, see,
I speak of him in the past. Unhappy land!
Hard-natured Queen, half-Spanish in herself,
And grafted on the hard-grain'd stock of Spain—
Her life, since Philip left her, and she lost
Her fierce desire of bearing him a child,
Hath, like a brief and bitter winter's day,
Gone narrowing down and darkening to a close.
There will be more conspiracies, I fear.

PAGET. Ay, ay, beware of France.

HOWARD. O Paget, Paget!
I have seen heretics of the poorer sort,
Expectant of the rack from day to day,
To whom the fire were welcome, lying chain'd
In breathless dungeons over steaming sewers,
Fed with rank bread that crawl'd upon the tongue,
And putrid water, every drop a worm,
Until they died of rotted limbs; and then
Cast on the dunghill naked, and become
Hideously alive again from head to heel,
Made even the carrion-nosing mongrel vomit
With hate and horror.

PAGET. Nay, you sicken *me*
To hear you.

HOWARD. Fancy-sick; these things are done,
Done right against the promise of this Queen
Twice given.

PAGET. No faith with heretics, my Lord!
Hist! there be two old gossips—gospellers,
I take it; stand behind the pillar here;
I warrant you they talk about the burning.

Enter TWO OLD WOMEN. JOAN, *and after her* TIB.

JOAN. Why, it be Tib!

TIB. I cum behind tha, gall, and couldn't make tha hear. Eh, the wind and the wet! What a day, what a day! nigh upo' judgement daay loike. Pwoaps be pretty things, Joan, but they wunt set i' the Lord's cheer o' that daay.

JOAN. I must set down myself, Tib; it be a var waay vor my owld legs up vro' Islip. Eh, my rheumatizy be that bad howiver be I to win to the burnin'.

TIB. I should saay 'twur ower by now. I'd ha' been here avore, but Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, and Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

JOAN. Our Daisy's as good 'z her.

TIB. Noa, Joan.

JOAN. Our Daisy's butter's as good 'z hern.

TIB. Noa, Joan.

JOAN. Our Daisy's cheeses be better.

TIB. Noa, Joan.

JOAN. Eh, then ha' thy waay wi' me, Tib; ez thou hast wi' thy owld man.

TIB. Ay, Joan, and my owld man wur up and awaay betimes wi' dree hard eggs for a good pleace at the burnin'; and barrin' the wet, Hodge 'ud ha' been a-harrowin' o' white peasen i' the outfield—and barrin' the wind, Dumble wur blow'd wi' the wind, so 'z we was forced to stick her, but we fetched her round at last. Thank the Lord therevore. Dumble's the best milcher in Islip.

JOAN. Thou's thy way wi' man and beast, Tib. I wonder at tha', it beats me! Eh, but I do know ez Pwoaps and vires be bad things; tell 'ee now, I heerd summat as summun towld summun o' owld Bishop Gardiner's end; there wur an owld lord a-cum to dine wi' un, and a wur so owld a couldn't bide vor his dinner, but a had to bide howsomiver, vor 'I wunt dine,' says my Lord Bishop, says he, 'not till I hears ez Latimer and Ridley be a-vire;' and so they bided on and on till vour o' the clock, till his man cum in post vro' here, and tells un ez the vire has tuk holt. 'Now,' says the Bishop, says he, 'we'll gwo to dinner;' and the owld lord fell to 's meat wi' a will, God bless

un! but Gardiner wur struck down like by the hand o' God avore a could taste a mossel, and a set un all a-vire, so 'z the tongue on un cum a-lolluping out o' 'is mouth as black as a rat Thank the Lord, therevore.

PAGET. The fools!

TIB. Ay, Joan; and Queen Mary gwoes on a-burnin' and a-burnin', to get her baaby born; but all her burnin's 'ill never burn out the hypocrisy that makes the water in her. There's nought but the vire of God's hell ez can burn out that.

JOAN. Thank the Lord, therevore.

PAGET. The fools!

TIB. A-burnin', and a-burnin', and a-makin' o' volk madder and madder; but tek thou my word vor't, Joan,—and I bean't wrong not twice i' ten year —the burnin' o' the owld archbishop 'll burn the Pwoap out o' this 'ere land vor iver and iver.

HOWARD. Out of the church, you brace of cursed crones,
Or I will have you duck'd! (*Women hurry out.*)
Said I not right?
For how should reverend prelate or throned prince
Brook for an hour such brute malignity?
Ah, what an acrid wine has Luther brew'd!

PAGET. Pooh, pooh, my Lord! poor garrulous country-wives.

Buy you their cheeses, and they'll side with you;
You cannot judge the liquor from the lees.

HOWARD. I think that in some sort we may. But see,

Enter PETERS.

Peters, my gentleman, an honest Catholic,
Who follow'd with the crowd to Cranmer's fire.
One that would neither misreport nor lie,
Not to gain paradise: no, nor if the Pope,
Charged him to do it—he is white as death.
Peters, how pale you look! you bring the smoke
Of Cranmer's burning with you.

PETERS. Twice or thrice
The smoke of Cranmer's burning wrapt me round.

HOWARD. Peters, you know me Catholic, but English.
Did he die bravely? Tell me that, or leave
All else untold.

PETERS. My Lord, he died most bravely.

HOWARD. Then tell me all.

PAGET. Ay, Master Peters, tell us.

PETERS. You saw him how he past among the crowd;
And ever as he walk'd the Spanish friars
Still plied him with entreaty and reproach:
But Cranmer, as the helmsman at the helm
Steers, ever looking to the happy haven

Where he shall rest at night, moved to his death;
And I could see that many silent hands
Came from the crowd and met his own; and thus,
When he had come where Ridley burnt with Latimer,
He, with a cheerful smile, as one whose mind
Is all made up, in haste put off the rags
They had mock'd his misery with, and all in white,
His long white beard, which he had never shaven
Since Henry's death, down-sweeping to the chain,
Wherewith they bound him to the stake, he stood
More like an ancient father of the Church,
Than heretic of these times; and still the friars
Plied him, but Cranmer only shook his head,
Or answer'd them in smiling negatives;
Whereat Lord Williams gave a sudden cry:—
'Make short! make short!' and so they lit the wood.
Then Cranmer lifted his left hand to heaven,
And thrust his right into the bitter flame;
And crying, in his deep voice, more than once,
'This hath offended—this unworthy hand!'
So held it till it all was burn'd, before
The flame had reach'd his body; I stood near—
Mark'd him—he never uttered moan of pain:
He never stirr'd or writhed, but, like a statue,
Unmoving in the greatness of the flame,
Gave up the ghost; and so past martyr-like—
Martyr I may not call him—past—but whither?

PAGET. To purgatory, man, to purgatory.

PETERS. Nay, but, my Lord, he denied purgatory.

PAGET. Why then to heaven, and God ha' mercy on him.

HOWARD. Paget, despite his fearful heresies,
I loved the man, and needs must moan for him;
O Cranmer!

PAGET. But your moan is useless now:
Come out, my Lord, it is a world of fools. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—LONDON. HALL IN THE PALACE.

QUEEN, SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

HEATH. Madam,
I do assure you, that it must be look'd to:
Calais is but ill-garrison'd, in Guisnes
Are scarce two hundred men, and the French fleet
Rule in the narrow seas. It must be look'd to,
If war should fall between yourself and France;
Or you will lose your Calais.

MARY. It shall be look'd to;
I wish you a good morning, good Sir Nicholas:
Here is the King. [*Exit* HEATH.

Enter PHILIP.

PHILIP. Sir Nicholas tells you true,
And you must look to Calais when I go.

MARY. Go? must you go, indeed—again—so soon?

Why, nature's licensed vagabond, the swallow,
That might live always in the sun's warm heart,
Stays longer here in our poor north than you :—
Knows where he nested—ever comes again.

PHILIP. And, Madam, so shall I.

MARY. O, will you? will you?
I am faint with fear that you will come no more.

PHILIP. Ay, ay; but many voices call me hence.

MARY. Voices—I hear unhappy rumours—nay,
I say not, I believe. What voices call you
Dearer than mine that should be dearest to you?
Alas, my Lord! what voices and how many?

PHILIP. The voices of Castile and Aragon,
Granada, Naples, Sicily, and Milan,—
The voices of Franche-Comté, and the Netherlands,
The voices of Peru and Mexico,
Tunis, and Oran, and the Philippines,
And all the fair spice-islands of the East.

MARY (*admiringly*). You are the mightiest monarch upon earth,
I but a little Queen: and, so indeed,
Need you the more.

PHILIP. A little Queen! but when
I came to wed your majesty, Lord Howard,
Sending an insolent shot that dash'd the seas
Upon us, made us lower our kingly flag
To yours of England.

MARY. Howard is all English!
There is no king, not were he ten times king,
Ten times our husband, but must lower his flag
To that of England in the seas of England.

PHILIP. Is that your answer?

MARY. Being Queen of England,
I have none other.

PHILIP. So.

MARY. But wherefore not
Helm the huge vessel of your state, my liege,
Here by the side of her who loves you most?

PHILIP. No, Madam, no! a candle in the sun
Is all but smoke—a star beside the moon
Is all but lost; your people will not crown me—
Your people are as cheerless as your clime;
Hate me and mine: witness the brawls, the gibbets.
Here swings a Spaniard—there an Englishman;
The peoples are unlike as their complexion;
Yet will I be your swallow and return—
But now I cannot bide.

MARY. Not to help *me*?
They hate *me* also for my love to you,
My Philip; and these judgments on the land—
Harvestless autumns, horrible agues, plague—

PHILIP. The blood and sweat of heretics at the stake
Is God's best dew upon the barren field.
Burn more!

MARY. I will, I will; and you will stay?

PHILIP. Have I not said? Madam, I came to sue
Your Council and yourself to declare war.

MARY. Sir, there are many English in your ranks
To help your battle.

PHILIP. So far, good. I say
I came to sue your Council and yourself
To declare war against the King of France.

MARY. Not to see me?

PHILIP. Ay, Madam, to see you.
Unalterably and pesteringly fond! [*Aside.*
But, soon or late you must have war with France;
King Henry warms your traitors at his hearth.
Carew is there, and Thomas Stafford there.
Courtenay, belike—

MARY. A fool and featherhead!

PHILIP. Ay, but they use his name. In brief, this Henry
Stirs up your land against you to the intent
That you may lose your English heritage.
And then, your Scottish namesake marrying
The Dauphin, he would weld France, England, Scotland,
Into one sword to hack at Spain and me.

MARY. And yet the Pope is now colleagued with France;

You make your wars upon him down in Italy:—
Philip, can that be well?

PHILIP. Content you, Madam;
You must abide my judgment, and my father's,
Who deems it a most just and holy war.
The Pope would cast the Spaniard out of Naples:
He calls us worse than Jews, Moors, Saracens.
The Pope has pushed his horns beyond his mitre—
Beyond his province. Now,
Duke Alva will but touch him on the horns,
And he withdraws; and of his holy head—
For Alva is true son of the true church—
No hair is harm'd. Will you not help me here?

MARY. Alas! the Council will not hear of war.
They say your wars are not the wars of England.
They will not lay more taxes on a land
So hunger-nipt and wretched; and you know
The crown is poor. We have given the church-lands back:
The nobles would not; nay, they clapt their hands
Upon their swords when ask'd; and therefore God
Is hard upon the people. What's to be done?
Sir, I will move them in your cause again,
And we will raise us loans and subsidies
Among the merchants; and Sir Thomas Gresham
Will aid us. There is Antwerp and the Jews.

PHILIP. Madam, my thanks.

MARY. And you will stay your going?

PHILIP. And further to discourage and lay lame
The plots of France, altho' you love her not,
You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.
She stands between you and the Queen of Scots.

MARY. The Queen of Scots at least is Catholic.

PHILIP. Ay, Madam, Catholic; but I will not have
The King of France the King of England too.

MARY. But she's a heretic, and, when I am gone,
Brings the new learning back.

PHILIP. It must be done.
You must proclaim Elizabeth your heir.

MARY. Then it is done; but you will stay your going
Somewhat beyond your settled purpose?

PHILIP. No!

MARY. What, not one day?

PHILIP. You beat upon the rock.

MARY. And I am broken there.

PHILIP. Is this a place
To wail in, Madam? what! a public hall.
Go in, I pray you.

MARY. Do not seem so changed.
Say go; but only say it lovingly.

PHILIP. You do mistake. I am not one to change.
I never loved you more.

MARY. Sire, I obey you.
Come quickly.
PHILIP. Ay. [*Exit* MARY.

Enter COUNT DE FERIA.

FERIA (*aside*). The Queen in tears!
PHILIP. Feria!
Hast thou not mark'd—come closer to mine ear—
How doubly aged this Queen of ours hath grown
Since she lost hope of bearing us a child?
FERIA. Sire, if your Grace hath mark'd it, so have I.
PHILIP. Hast thou not likewise mark'd Elizabeth,
How fair and royal—like a Queen, indeed?
FERIA. Allow me the same answer as before—
That if your Grace hath mark'd her, so have I.
PHILIP. Good, now; methinks my Queen is like enough
To leave me by and by.
FERIA. To leave you, sire?
PHILIP. I mean not like to live. Elizabeth—
To Philibert of Savoy, as you know,
We meant to wed her; but I am not sure
She will not serve me better—so my Queen
Would leave me—as—my wife.
FERIA. Sire, even so.

PHILIP. She will not have Prince Philibert of Savoy.

FERIA. No, sire.

PHILIP. I have to pray you, some odd time,
To sound the Princess carelessly on this;
Not as from me, but as your phantasy;
And tell me how she takes it.

FERIA. Sire, I will.

PHILIP. I am not certain but that Philibert
Shall be the man; and I shall urge his suit
Upon the Queen, because I am not certain:
You understand, Feria.

FERIA. Sire, I do.

PHILIP. And if you be not secret in this matter,
You understand me there, too?

FERIA. Sire, I do.

PHILIP. You must be sweet and supple, like a Frenchman.
She is none of those who loathe the honeycomb.

[*Exit* FERIA.

Enter RENARD.

RENARD. My liege, I bring you goodly tidings.

PHILIP. Well?

RENARD. There *will* be war with France, at last, my liege;
Sir Thomas Stafford, a bull-headed ass,

Sailing from France, with thirty Englishmen,
Hath taken Scarboro' Castle, north of York;
Proclaims himself protector, and affirms
The Queen has forfeited her right to reign
By marriage with an alien—other things
As idle; a weak Wyatt! Little doubt
This buzz will soon be silenced; but the Council
(I have talk'd with some already) are for war.
This is the fifth conspiracy hatch'd in France;
They show their teeth upon it; and your Grace,
So you will take advice of mine, should stay
Yet for awhile, to shape and guide the event.

PHILIP. Good! Renard, I will stay then.

RENARD. Also, sire,
Might I not say—to please your wife, the Queen?

PHILIP. Ay, Renard, if you care to put it so.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

MARY, *sitting: a rose in her hand.* LADY CLARENCE. ALICE *in the background.*

MARY. Look! I have play'd with this poor rose so long
I have broken off the head.

LADY CLARENCE. Your Grace hath been

More merciful to many a rebel head
That should have fallen, and may rise again.

MARY. There were not many hang'd for Wyatt's rising.

LADY CLARENCE. Nay, not two hundred.

MARY. I could weep for them
And her, and mine own self and all the world.

LADY CLARENCE. For her? for whom, your Grace?

Enter USHER.

USHER. The Cardinal.

Enter CARDINAL POLE. (MARY *rises.*)

MARY. Reginald Pole, what news hath plagued thy heart?
What makes thy favour like the bloodless head
Fall'n on the block, and held up by the hair?
Philip?—

POLE. No, Philip is as warm in life
As ever.

MARY. Ay, and then as cold as ever.
Is Calais taken?

POLE. Cousin, there hath chanced
A sharper harm to England and to Rome,
Than Calais taken. Julius the Third
Was ever just, and mild, and father-like;

But this new Pope Caraffa, Paul the Fourth,
Not only reft me of that legateship
Which Julius gave me, and the legateship
Annex'd to Canterbury—nay, but worse—
And yet I must obey the Hφly Father,
And so must you, good cousin;—worse than all,
A passing bell toll'd in a dying ear—
He hath cited me to Rome, for heresy,
Before his Inquisition.

MARY. I knew it, cousin,
But held from you all papers sent by Rome,
That you might rest among us, till the Pope,
To compass which I wrote myself to Rome,
Reversed his doom, and that you might not seem
To disobey his Holiness.

POLE. He hates Philip;
He is all Italian, and he hates the Spaniard;
He cannot dream that *I* advised the war;
He strikes thro' me at Philip and yourself.
Nay, but I know it of old, he hates me too;
So brands me in the stare of Christendom
A heretic!
Now, even now, when bow'd before my time,
The house half-ruin'd ere the lease be out;
When I should guide the Church in peace at home,
After my twenty years of banishment,
And all my lifelong labour to uphold

The primacy—a heretic. Long ago,
When I was ruler in the patrimony,
I was too lenient to the Lutheran,
And I and learned friends among ourselves
Would freely canvass certain Lutheranisms.
What then, he knew I was no Lutheran.
A heretic!
He drew this shaft against me to the head,
When it was thought I might be chosen Pope,
But then withdrew it. In full consistory,
When I was made Archbishop, he approved me.
And how should he have sent me Legate hither,
Deeming me heretic? and what heresy since?
But he was evermore mine enemy,
And hates the Spaniard—fiery-choleric,
A drinker of black, strong, volcanic wines,
That ever make him fierier. I, a heretic?
Your Highness knows that in pursuing heresy
I have gone beyond your late Lord Chancellor,—
He cried Enough! enough! before his death.—
Gone beyond him and mine own natural man
(It was God's cause); so far they call me now,
The scourge and butcher of their English church.

MARY. Have courage, your reward is Heaven itself.

POLE. They groan amen; they swarm into the fire

Like flies—for what? no dogma. They know nothing;
They burn for nothing.

MARY. You have done your best.

POLE. Have done my best, and as a faithful son,
That all day long hath wrought his father's work,
When back he comes at evening hath the door
Shut on him by the father whom he loved,
His early follies cast into his teeth,
And the poor son turn'd out into the street
To sleep, to die—I shall die of it, cousin.

MARY. I pray you be not so disconsolate;
I still will do mine utmost with the Pope.
Poor cousin!
Have I not been the fast friend of your life
Since mine began, and it was thought we two
Might make one flesh, and cleave unto each other
As man and wife?

POLE. Ah, cousin, I remember
How I would dandle you upon my knee
At lisping-age. I watch'd you dancing once
With your huge father; he look'd the Great Harry,
You but his cockboat; prettily you did it,
And innocently. No—we were not made
One flesh in happiness, no happiness here;
But now we are made one flesh in misery;
Our bridemaids are not lovely—Disappointment,

Ingratitude, Injustice, Evil-tongue,
Labour-in-vain.

MARY. Surely, not all in vain.
Peace, cousin, peace! I am sad at heart myself.

POLE. Our altar is a mound of dead men's clay,
Dug from the grave that yawns for us beyond;
And there is one Death stands behind the Groom,
And there is one Death stands behind the Bride—

MARY. Have you been looking at the 'Dance of Death'?

POLE. No; but these libellous papers which I found
Strewn in your palace. Look you here—the Pope
Pointing at me with 'Pole, the heretic,
Thou hast burnt others, do thou burn thyself,
Or I will burn thee;' and this other; see!—
'We pray continually for the death
Of our accursed Queen and Cardinal Pole.'
This last—I dare not read it her. [*Aside.*

MARY. Away!
Why do you bring me these?
I thought you knew me better. I never read,
I tear them; they come back upon my dreams.
The hands that write them should be burnt clean off
As Cranmer's, and the fiends that utter them
Tongue-torn with pincers, lash'd to death, or lie
Famishing in black cells, while famish'd rats

Eat them alive. Why do they bring me these?
Do you mean to drive me mad?

POLE. I had forgotten
How these poor libels trouble you. Your pardon,
Sweet cousin, and farewell! 'O bubble world,
Whose colours in a moment break and fly!'
Why, who said that? I know not—true enough!

[*Puts up the papers, all but the last, which falls.*
Exit POLE.

ALICE. If Cranmer's spirit were a mocking one,
And heard these two, there might be sport for him.

[*Aside.*

MARY. Clarence, they hate me; even while I speak
There lurks a silent dagger, listening
In some dark closet, some long gallery, drawn,
And panting for my blood as I go by.

LADY CLARENCE. Nay, Madam, there be loyal papers too,
And I have often found them.

MARY. Find me one!

LADY CLARENCE. Ay, Madam; but Sir Nicholas Heath, the Chancellor,
Would see your Highness.

MARY. Wherefore should I see him?

LADY CLARENCE. Well, Madam, he may bring you news from Philip.

MARY. So, Clarence.

LADY CLARENCE. Let me first put up your hair;
It tumbles all abroad.

MARY. And the gray dawn
Of an old age that never will be mine
Is all the clearer seen. No, no; what matters?
Forlorn I am, and let me look forlorn.

Enter SIR NICHOLAS HEATH.

HEATH. I bring your Majesty such grievous news
I grieve to bring it. Madam, Calais is taken.

MARY. What traitor spoke? Here, let my cousin Pole
Seize him and burn him for a Lutheran.

HEATH. Her Highness is unwell. I will retire.

LADY CLARENCE. Madam, your Chancellor, Sir Nicholas Heath.

MARY. Sir Nicholas! I am stunn'd—Nicholas Heath?
Methought some traitor smote me on the head.
What said you, my good Lord, that our brave English
Had sallied out from Calais and driven back
The Frenchmen from their trenches?

HEATH. Alas! no.
That gateway to the mainland over which

Our flag hath floated for two hundred years
Is France again.

MARY. So; but it is not lost—
Not yet. Send out: let England as of old
Rise lionlike, strike hard and deep into
The prey they are rending from her—ay, and rend
The renders too. Send out, send out, and make
Musters in all the counties; gather all
From sixteen years to sixty; collect the fleet;
Let every craft that carries sail and gun
Steer toward Calais. Guisnes is not taken yet?

HEATH. Guisnes is not taken yet.

MARY. There yet is hope.

HEATH. Ah, Madam, but your people are so cold;
I do much fear that England will not care.
Methinks there is no manhood left among us.

MARY. Send out; I am too weak to stir abroad:
Tell my mind to the Council—to the Parliament:
Proclaim it to the winds. Thou art cold thyself
To babble of their coldness. O would I were
My father for an hour! Away now—Quick!

[*Exit* HEATH.

I hoped I had served God with all my might!
It seems I have not. Ah! much heresy
Shelter'd in Calais. Saints, I have rebuilt
Your shrines, set up your broken images;
Be comfortable to me. Suffer not

That my brief reign in England be defamed
Thro' all her angry chronicles hereafter
By loss of Calais. Grant me Calais. Philip,
We have made war upon the Holy Father
All for your sake: what good could come of that?

LADY CLARENCE. No, Madam, not against the Holy Father;
You did but help King Philip's war with France,
Your troops were never down in Italy.

MARY. I am a byword. Heretic and rebel
Point at me and make merry. Philip gone!
And Calais gone! Time that I were gone too!

LADY CLARENCE. Nay, if the fetid gutter had a voice
And cried I was not clean, what should I care?
Or you, for heretic cries? And I believe,
Spite of your melancholy Sir Nicholas,
Your England is as loyal as myself.

MARY (*seeing the paper dropt by* POLE). There! there! another paper! Said you not
Many of these were loyal? Shall I try
If this be one of such?

LADY CLARENCE. Let it be, let it be.
God pardon me! I have never yet found one.
[*Aside.*

MARY (*reads*). 'Your people hate you as your husband hates you.'

Clarence, Clarence, what have I done? what sin
Beyond all grace, all pardon? Mother of God,
Thou knowest never woman meant so well,
And fared so ill in this disastrous world.
My people hate me and desire my death.

LADY CLARENCE. No, Madam, no.

MARY. My husband hates me, and desires my death.

LADY CLARENCE. No, Madam; these are libels.

MARY. I hate myself, and I desire my death.

LADY CLARENCE. Long live your Majesty! Shall Alice sing you
One of her pleasant songs? Alice, my child,
Bring us your lute (ALICE *goes*). They say the gloom of Saul
Was lighten'd by young David's harp.

MARY. Too young!
And never knew a Philip.

Re-enter ALICE.

Give *me* the lute.
He hates me!

(*She sings.*)

Hapless doom of woman happy in betrothing!
Beauty passes like a breath and love is lost in loathing:
Low, my lute; speak low, my lute, but say the world is nothing—
Low, lute, low!

Love will hover round the flowers when they first awaken;
Love will fly the fallen leaf, and not be overtaken;
Low, my lute! oh low, my lute! we fade and are forsaken—
Low, dear lute, low!

Take it away! not low enough for me!

ALICE. Your Grace hath a low voice.

MARY. How dare you say it?
Even for that he hates me. A low voice
Lost in a wilderness where none can hear!
A voice of shipwreck on a shoreless sea!
A low voice from the dust and from the grave.
(*Sitting on the ground.*) There, am I low enough now?

ALICE. Good Lord! how grim and ghastly looks her Grace,
With both her knees drawn upward to her chin.
There was an old-world tomb beside my father's,
And this was open'd, and the dead were found
Sitting, and in this fashion; she looks a corpse.

Enter LADY MAGDALEN DACRES.

LADY MAGDALEN. Madam, the Count de Feria waits without,
In hopes to see your Highness.

LADY CLARENCE (*pointing to* MARY). Wait he must—

Her trance again. She neither sees nor hears,
And may not speak for hours.

LADY MAGDALEN. Unhappiest
Of Queens and wives and women!

ALICE (*in the foreground with* LADY MAGDALEN). And all along
Of Philip.

LADY MAGDALEN. Not so loud! Our Clarence there
Sees ever such an aureole round the Queen,
It gilds the greatest wronger of her peace,
Who stands the nearest to her.

ALICE. Ay, this Philip;
I used to love the Queen with all my heart—
God help me, but methinks I love her less
For such a dotage upon such a man.
I would I were as tall and strong as you.

LADY MAGDALEN. I seem half-shamed at times to be so tall.

ALICE. You are the stateliest deer in all the herd—
Beyond his aim—but I am small and scandalous,
And love to hear bad tales of Philip.

LADY MAGDALEN. Why?
I never heard him utter worse of you
Than that you were low-statured.

ALICE. Does he think

Low stature is low nature, or all women's
Low as his own?

LADY MAGDALEN. There you strike in the nail.
This coarseness is a want of phantasy.
It is the low man thinks the woman low;
Sin is too dull to see beyond himself.

ALICE. Ah, Magdalen, sin is bold as well as dull.
How dared he?

LADY MAGDALEN. Stupid soldiers oft are bold.
Poor lads, they see not what the general sees,
A risk of utter ruin. I am *not*
Beyond his aim, or was not.

ALICE. Who? Not you?
Tell, tell me; save my credit with myself.

LADY MAGDALEN. I never breathed it to a bird in the eaves,
Would not for all the stars and maiden moon
Our drooping Queen should know! In Hampton Court
My window look'd upon the corridor;
And I was robing;—this poor throat of mine,
Barer than I should wish a man to see it,—
When he we speak of drove the window back,
And, like a thief, push'd in his royal hand;
But by God's providence a good stout staff
Lay near me; and you know me strong of arm;
I do believe I lamed his Majesty's

For a day or two, tho', give the Devil his due.
I never found he bore me any spite.

ALICE. I would she could have wedded that poor youth,
My Lord of Devon—light enough, God knows,
And mixt with Wyatt's rising—and the boy
Not out of him—but neither cold, coarse, cruel,
And more than all—no Spaniard.

LADY CLARENCE. Not so loud.
Lord Devon, girls! what are you whispering here?

ALICE. Probing an old state-secret—how it chanced
That this young Earl was sent on foreign travel,
Not lost his head.

LADY CLARENCE. There was no proof against him.

ALICE. Nay, Madam; did not Gardiner intercept
A letter which the Count de Noailles wrote
To that dead traitor Wyatt, with full proof
Of Courtenay's treason? What became of that?

LADY CLARENCE. Some say that Gardiner, out of love for him,
Burnt it, and some relate that it was lost
When Wyatt sack'd the Chancellor's house in Southwark.
Let dead things rest.

ALICE. Ay, and with him who died
Alone in Italy.

LADY CLARENCE. Much changed, I hear,

Had put off levity and put graveness on.
The foreign courts report him in his manner
Noble as his young person and old shield.
It might be so—but all is over now;
He caught a chill in the lagoons of Venice,
And died in Padua.

MARY (*looking up suddenly*). Died in the true faith?

LADY CLARENCE. Ay, Madam, happily.

MARY. Happier he than I.

LADY MAGDALEN. It seems her Highness hath awaken'd. Think you
That I might dare to tell her that the Count——

MARY. I will see no man hence for evermore,
Saving my confessor and my cousin Pole.

LADY MAGDALEN. It is the Count de Feria, my dear lady.

MARY. What Count?

LADY MAGDALEN. The Count de Feria, from his Majesty
King Philip.

MARY. Philip! quick! loop up my hair!
Throw cushions on that seat, and make it throne-like.
Arrange my dress—the gorgeous Indian shawl
That Philip brought me in our happy days!—
That covers all. So—am I somewhat Queenlike,
Bride of the mightiest sovereign upon earth?

LADY CLARENCE. Ay, so your Grace would bide
a moment yet.

MARY. No, no, he brings a letter. I may die
Before I read it. Let me see him at once.

Enter COUNT DE FERIA (*kneels*).

FERIA. I trust your Grace is well. (*Aside*) How
her hand burns!

MARY. I am not well, but it will better me,
Sir Count, to read the letter which you bring.

FERIA. Madam, I bring no letter.

MARY. How! no letter?

FERIA. His Highness is so vex'd with strange affairs—

MARY. That his own wife is no affair of his.

FERIA. Nay, Madam, nay! he sends his veriest love,
And says, he will come quickly.

MARY. Doth he, indeed?
You, sir, do *you* remember what *you* said
When last you came to England?

FERIA. Madam, I brought
My King's congratulations; it was hoped
Your Highness was once more in happy state
To give him an heir male.

MARY. Sir, you said more;
You said he would come quickly. I had horses
On all the road from Dover, day and night;

On all the road from Harwich, night and day;
But the child came not, and the husband came not;
And yet he will come quickly. . . Thou hast learnt
Thy lesson, and I mine. There is no need
For Philip so to shame himself again.
Return,
And tell him that I know he comes no more.
Tell him at last I know his love is dead,
And that I am in state to bring forth death—
Thou art commission'd to Elizabeth,
And not to me!

FERIA. Mere compliments and wishes.
But shall I take some message from your Grace?

MARY. Tell her to come and close my dying eyes,
And wear my crown, and dance upon my grave.

FERIA. Then I may say your Grace will see your sister?
Your Grace is too low-spirited. Air and sunshine.
I would we had you, Madam, in our warm Spain.
You droop in your dim London.

MARY. Have him away!
I sicken of his readiness.

LADY CLARENCE. My Lord Count,
Her Highness is too ill for colloquy.

FERIA (*kneels, and kisses her hand*). I wish her Highness better. (*Aside*) How her hand burns!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

ELIZABETH, STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD, ATTENDANTS.

ELIZABETH. There's half an angel wrong'd in your account;
Methinks I am all angel, that I bear it
Without more ruffling. Cast it o'er again.

STEWARD. I were whole devil if I wrong'd you, Madam. [*Exit* STEWARD.

ATTENDANT. The Count de Feria, from the King of Spain.

ELIZABETH. Ah!—let him enter. Nay, you need not go: [*To her* LADIES.
Remain within the chamber, but apart.
We'll have no private conference. Welcome to England!

Enter FERIA.

FERIA. Fair island star!

ELIZABETH. I shine! What else, Sir Count?

FERIA. As far as France, and into Philip's heart.
My King would know if you be fairly served,
And lodged, and treated.

ELIZABETH. You see the lodging, sir,

I am well-served, and am in everything
Most loyal and most grateful to the Queen.

FERIA. You should be grateful to my master, too.

He spoke of this; and unto him you owe
That Mary hath acknowledged you her heir.

ELIZABETH. No, not to her nor him; but to the people,
Who know my right, and love me, as I love
The people! whom God aid!

FERIA. You will be Queen,
And, were I Philip—

ELIZABETH. Wherefore pause you—what?

FERIA. Nay, but I speak from mine own self, not him;
Your royal sister cannot last; your hand
Will be much coveted! What a delicate one!
Our Spanish ladies have none such—and there,
Were you in Spain, this fine fair gossamer gold—
Like sun-gilt breathings on a frosty dawn—
That hovers round your shoulder—

ELIZABETH. Is it so fine?
Troth, some have said so.

FERIA. —would be deemed a miracle.

ELIZABETH. Your Philip hath gold hair and golden beard;
There must be ladies many with hair like mine.

FERIA. Some few of Gothic blood have golden hair,
But none like yours.

ELIZABETH. I am happy you approve it.

FERIA. But as to Philip and your Grace—consider,—
If such a one as you should match with Spain,
What hinders but that Spain and England join'd,
Should make the mightiest empire earth has known.
Spain would be England on her seas, and England
Mistress of the Indies.

ELIZABETH. It may chance, that England
Will be the Mistress of the Indies yet,
Without the help of Spain.

FERIA. Impossible;
Except you put Spain down.
Wide of the mark ev'n for a madman's dream.

ELIZABETH. Perhaps; but we have seamen. Count de Feria,
I take it that the King hath spoken to you;
But is Don Carlos such a goodly match?

FERIA. Don Carlos, Madam, is but twelve years old.

ELIZABETH. Ay, tell the King that I will muse upon it;
He is my good friend, and I would keep him so;
But—he would have me Catholic of Rome,
And that I scarce can be; and, sir, till now

My sister's marriage, and my father's marriages,
Make me full fain to live and die a maid.
But I am much beholden to your King.
Have you aught else to tell me?

FERIA. Nothing, Madam,
Save that methought I gather'd from the Queen
That she would see your Grace before she—died.

ELIZABETH. God's death! and wherefore spake you not before?
We dally with our lazy moments here,
And hers are number'd. Horses there, without!
I am much beholden to the King, your master.
Why did you keep me prating? Horses, there!

[*Exit* ELIZABETH, *etc.*

FERIA. So from a clear sky falls the thunderbolt!
Don Carlos? Madam, if you marry Philip,
Then I and he will snaffle your 'God's death,'
And break your paces in, and make you tame;
God's death, forsooth—you do not know King Philip.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—LONDON. BEFORE THE PALACE.

A light burning within. VOICES *of the night passing.*

FIRST. Is not yon light in the Queen's chamber?

SECOND. Ay,
They say she's dying.

FIRST. So is Cardinal Pole.
May the great angels join their wings, and make
Down for their heads to heaven!

SECOND. Amen. Come on.
[*Exeunt.*

TWO OTHERS.

FIRST. There's the Queen's light. I hear she cannot live.

SECOND. God curse her and her Legate! Gardiner burns
Already; but to pay them full in kind,
The hottest hold in all the devil's den
Were but a sort of winter; sir, in Guernsey,
I watch'd a woman burn; and in her agony
The mother came upon her—a child was born—
And, sir, they hurl'd it back into the fire,
That, being but baptized in fire, the babe
Might be in fire for ever. Ah, good neighbour,
There should be something fierier than fire
To yield them their deserts.

FIRST. Amen to all
Your wish, and further.

A THIRD VOICE. Deserts? Amen to what? Whose deserts? Yours? You have a gold ring on your finger, and soft raiment about your body; and is not the woman up yonder sleeping after all she has

done, in peace and quietness, on a soft bed, in a closed room, with light, fire, physic, tendance; and I have seen the true men of Christ lying famine-dead by scores, and under no ceiling but the cloud that wept on them, not for them.

FIRST. Friend, tho' so late, it is not safe to preach. You had best go home. What are you?

THIRD. What am I? One who cries continually with sweat and tears to the Lord God that it would please Him out of His infinite love to break down all kingship and queenship, all priesthood and prelacy; to cancel and abolish all bonds of human allegiance, all the magistracy, all the nobles, and all the wealthy; and to send us again, according to His promise, the one King, the Christ, and all things in common, as in the day of the first church, when Christ Jesus was King.

FIRST. If ever I heard a madman,—let's away!
Why, you long-winded—— Sir, you go beyond me.
I pride myself on being moderate.
Good night! Go home. Besides, you curse so loud,
The watch will hear you. Get you home at once.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—LONDON. A ROOM IN THE PALACE.

A Gallery on one side. The moonlight streaming through a range of windows on the wall opposite. MARY, LADY CLARENCE, LADY MAGDALEN DACRES, ALICE. QUEEN *pacing the Gallery. A writing-table in front.* QUEEN *comes to the table and writes and goes again, pacing the Gallery.*

LADY CLARENCE. Mine eyes are dim: what hath she written? read.

ALICE. 'I am dying, Philip; come to me.'

LADY MAGDALEN. There—up and down, poor lady, up and down.

ALICE. And how her shadow crosses one by one
The moonlight casements pattern'd on the wall,
Following her like her sorrow. She turns again.

[QUEEN *sits and writes, and goes again.*

LADY CLARENCE. What hath she written now?

ALICE. Nothing; but 'come, come, come,' and all awry,
And blotted by her tears. This cannot last.

[QUEEN *returns.*

MARY. I whistle to the bird has broken cage,
And all in vain. [*Sitting down.*
Calais gone—Guisnes gone, too—and Philip gone!

LADY CLARENCE. Dear Madam, Philip is but at the wars;
I cannot doubt but that he comes again;
And he is with you in a measure still.
I never look'd upon so fair a likeness
As your great King in armour there, his hand
Upon his helmet.
[*Pointing to the portrait of Philip on the wall.*

MARY. Doth he not look noble?
I had heard of him in battle over seas,
And I would have my warrior all in arms.
He said it was not courtly to stand helmeted
Before the Queen. He had his gracious moment,
Altho' you'll not believe me. How he smiles
As if he loved me yet!

LADY CLARENCE. And so he does.

MARY. He never loved me—nay, he could not love me.
It was his father's policy against France.
I am eleven years older than he,
Poor boy! [*Weeps.*

ALICE. That was a lusty boy of twenty-seven;
[*Aside.*
Poor enough in God's grace!

MARY. —And all in vain!
The Queen of Scots is married to the Dauphin,
And Charles, the lord of this low world, is gone;

And all his wars and wisdoms past away;
And in a moment I shall follow him.

LADY CLARENCE. Nay, dearest Lady, see your good physician.

MARY. Drugs—but he knows they cannot help me—says
That rest is all—tells me I must not think—
That I must rest—I shall rest by and by.
Catch the wild cat, cage him, and when he springs
And maims himself against the bars, say 'rest':
Why, you must kill him if you would have him rest—
Dead or alive you cannot make him happy.

LADY CLARENCE. Your Majesty has lived so pure a life,
And done such mighty things by Holy Church,
I trust that God will make you happy yet.

MARY. What is the strange thing happiness? Sit down here:
Tell me thine happiest hour.

LADY CLARENCE. I will, if that
May make your Grace forget yourself a little.
There runs a shallow brook across our field
For twenty miles, where the black crow flies five,
And doth so bound and babble all the way
As if itself were happy. It was May-time,
And I was walking with the man I loved.
I loved him, but I thought I was not loved.

And both were silent, letting the wild brook
Speak for us—till he stoop'd and gather'd one
From out a bed of thick forget-me-nots,
Look'd hard and sweet at me, and gave it me.
I took it, tho' I did not know I took it,
And put it in my bosom, and all at once
I felt his arms about me, and his lips——

MARY. O God! I have been too slack, too slack;
There are Hot Gospellers even among our guards—
Nobles we dared not touch. We have but burnt
The heretic priest, workmen, and women and children.
Wet, famine, ague, fever, storm, wreck, wrath,—
We have so play'd the coward; but by God's grace,
We'll follow Philip's leading, and set up
The Holy Office here—garner the wheat,
And burn the tares with unquenchable fire!
Burn!—
Fie, what a savour! tell the cooks to close
The doors of all the offices below.
Latimer!
Sir, we are private with our women here—
Ever a rough, blunt, and uncourtly fellow—
Thou light a torch that never will go out!
'Tis out—mine flames. Women, the Holy Father
Has ta'en the legateship from our cousin Pole—
Was that well done? and poor Pole pines of it,
As I do, to the death. I am but a woman,

I have no power.—Ah, weak and meek old man,
Seven-fold dishonour'd even in the sight
Of thine own sectaries—No, no. No pardon!—
Why that was false: there is the right hand still
Beckons me hence.
Sir, you were burnt for heresy, not for treason,
Remember that! 'twas I and Bonner did it,
And Pole; we are three to one—Have you found mercy there,
Grant it me here: and see, he smiles and goes,
Gentle as in life.

ALICE. Madam, who goes? King Philip?

MARY. No, Philip comes and goes, but never goes.

Women, when I am dead,
Open my heart, and there you will find written
Two names, Philip and Calais; open his,—
So that he have one,—
You will find Philip only, policy, policy,—
Ay, worse than that—not one hour true to me!
Foul maggots crawling in a fester'd vice!
Adulterous to the very heart of Hell.
Hast thou a knife?

ALICE. Ay, Madam, but o' God's mercy—

MARY. Fool, think'st thou I would peril mine own soul
By slaughter of the body? I could not, girl,

Not this way—callous with a constant stripe,
Unwoundable. The knife!

ALICE. Take heed, take heed!
The blade is keen as death.

MARY. This Philip shall not
Stare in upon me in my haggardness;
Old, miserable, diseased,
Incapable of children. Come thou down.

[*Cuts out the picture and throws it down*

Lie there. (*Wails*) O God, I have kill'd my Philip!

ALICE. No,
Madam, you have but cut the canvas out;
We can replace it.

MARY. All is well then; rest—
I will to rest; he said, I must have rest.

[*Cries of* 'ELIZABETH' *in the street.*

A cry! What's that? Elizabeth? revolt?
A new Northumberland, another Wyatt?
I'll fight it on the threshold of the grave.

LADY CLARENCE. Madam, your royal sister comes to see you.

MARY. I will not see her.
Who knows if Boleyn's daughter be my sister?
I will see none except the priest. Your arm.

[*To* LADY CLARENCE.

O Saint of Aragon, with that sweet worn smile
Among thy patient wrinkles—Help me hence. [*Exeunt.*

The PRIEST *passes.* *Enter* ELIZABETH *and* SIR WILLIAM CECIL.

ELIZABETH. Good counsel yours—
No one in waiting? still,
As if the chamberlain were Death himself!
The room she sleeps in—is not this the way?
No, that way there are voices. Am I too late?
Cecil . . . God guide me lest I lose the way.
[*Exit* ELIZABETH.

CECIL. Many points weather'd, many perilous ones,
At last a harbour opens; but therein
Sunk rocks—they need fine steering—much it is
To be nor mad, nor bigot—have a mind—
Nor let Priests' talk, or dream of worlds to be,
Miscolour things about her—sudden touches
For him, or him—sunk rocks; no passionate faith—
But—if let be—balance and compromise;
Brave, wary, sane to the heart of her—a Tudor
School'd by the shadow of death—a Boleyn, too,
Glancing across the Tudor—not so well.

Enter ALICE.

How is the good Queen now?

ALICE. Away from Philip.

Back in her childhood—prattling to her mother
Of her betrothal to the Emperor Charles,
And childlike-jealous of him again—and once
She thank'd her father sweetly for his book
Against that godless German. Ah, those days
Were happy. It was never merry world
In England, since the Bible came among us.

CECIL. And who says that?

ALICE. It is a saying among the Catholics.

CECIL. It never will be merry world in England,
Till all men have their Bible, rich and poor.

ALICE. The Queen is dying, or you dare not say it.

Enter ELIZABETH.

ELIZABETH. The Queen is dead.

CECIL. Then here she stands! my homage.

ELIZABETH. She knew me, and acknowledged me her heir,
Pray'd me to pay her debts, and keep the Faith;
Then clasp the cross, and pass'd away in peace.
I left her lying still and beautiful,
More beautiful than in life. Why would you vex yourself,
Poor sister? Sir, I swear I have no heart
To be your Queen. To reign is restless fence,
Tierce, quart, and trickery. Peace is with the dead.

Her life was winter, for her spring was nipt:
And she loved much: pray God she be forgiven.

CECIL. Peace with the dead, who never were at peace!

Yet she loved one so much—I needs must say—
That never English monarch dying left
England so little.

ELIZABETH. But with Cecil's aid
And others, if our person be secured
From traitor stabs—we will make England great.

Enter PAGET, *and other* LORDS OF THE COUNCIL, SIR RALPH BAGENHALL, *etc.*

LORDS. God save Elizabeth, the Queen of England!

BAGENHALL. God save the Crown! the papacy is no more.

PAGET (*aside*). Are we so sure of that?

ACCLAMATION. God save the Queen!

END OF QUEEN MARY.

HAROLD

A DRAMA

To His Excellency

THE RIGHT HON. LORD LYTTON,

VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA.

My dear Lord Lytton,—After old-world records—such as the Bayeux tapestry and the Roman de Rou,—Edward Freeman's History of the Norman Conquest, and your father's Historical Romance treating of the same times, have been mainly helpful to me in writing this Drama. Your father dedicated his 'Harold' to my father's brother; allow me to dedicate my 'Harold' to yourself.

A. TENNYSON.

SHOW-DAY AT BATTLE ABBEY, 1876.

A GARDEN here—May breath and bloom of spring—
The cuckoo yonder from an English elm
Crying 'with my false egg I overwhelm
The native nest:' and fancy hears the ring
Of harness, and that deathful arrow sing,
And Saxon battleaxe clang on Norman helm.
Here rose the dragon-banner of our realm:
Here fought, here fell, our Norman-slander'd king.
O Garden blossoming out of English blood!
O strange hate-healer Time! We stroll and stare
Where might made right eight hundred years ago;
Might, right? ay good, so all things make for good—
But he and he, if soul be soul, are where
Each stands full face with all he did below.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

STIGAND, *Created Archbishop of Canterbury by the Antipope Benedict.*

ALDRED, *Archbishop of York.*

THE NORMAN BISHOP OF LONDON.

HAROLD, *Earl of Wessex, afterwards King of England*
TOSTIG, *Earl of Northumbria*
GURTH, *Earl of East Anglia*
LEOFWIN, *Earl of Kent and Essex*
WULFNOTH
} *Sons of Godwin.*

COUNT WILLIAM OF NORMANDY.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

WILLIAM MALET, *a Norman Noble.*[1]

EDWIN, *Earl of Mercia*
MORCAR, *Earl of Northumbria after Tostig*
} *Sons of Alfgar of Mercia.*

GAMEL, *a Northumbrian Thane.*

GUY, *Count of Ponthieu.*

ROLF, *a Ponthieu Fisherman.*

HUGH MARGOT, *a Norman Monk.*

OSGOD *and* ATHELRIC, *Canons from Waltham.*

THE QUEEN, *Edward the Confessor's Wife, Daughter of Godwin.*

ALDWYTH, *Daughter of Alfgar and Widow of Griffyth, King of Wales.*

EDITH, *Ward of King Edward.*

Courtiers, Earls and Thanes, Men-at-Arms, Canons of Waltham, Fishermen, etc.

[1] . . . quidam partim Normannus et Anglus Compater Heraldi. (*Guy of Amiens*, 587.)

HAROLD.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—London. The King's Palace.

(*A comet seen through the open window.*)

Aldwyth, Gamel, Courtiers *talking together.*

First Courtier. Lo! there once more—this is the seventh night!
Yon grimly-glaring, treble-brandish'd scourge
Of England!

Second Courtier. Horrible!

First Courtier. Look you, there's a star
That dances in it as mad with agony!

Third Courtier. Ay, like a spirit in Hell who skips and flies
To right and left, and cannot scape the flame.

Second Courtier. Steam'd upward from the undescendable
Abysm.

FIRST COURTIER. Or floated downward from the throne
Of God Almighty.
ALDWYTH. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means?
GAMEL. War, my dear lady!
ALDWYTH. Doth this affright thee?
GAMEL. Mightily, my dear lady!
ALDWYTH. Stand by me then, and look upon my face,
Not on the comet.

Enter MORCAR.

Brother! why so pale?
MORCAR. It glares in heaven, it flares upon the Thames,
The people are as thick as bees below,
They hum like bees,—they cannot speak—for awe;
Look to the skies, then to the river, strike
Their hearts, and hold their babies up to it.
I think that they would Molochize them too,
To have the heavens clear.
ALDWYTH. They fright not me.

Enter LEOFWIN, *after him* GURTH.

Ask thou Lord Leofwin what he thinks of this!

MORCAR. Lord Leofwin, dost thou believe, that these
Three rods of blood-red fire up yonder mean
The doom of England and the wrath of Heaven?

BISHOP OF LONDON (*passing*). Did ye not cast with bestial violence
Our holy Norman bishops down from all
Their thrones in England? I alone remain.
Why should not Heaven be wroth?

LEOFWIN. With us, or thee?

BISHOP OF LONDON. Did ye not outlaw your archbishop Robert,
Robert of Jumiéges—well-nigh murder him too?
Is there no reason for the wrath of Heaven?

LEOFWIN. Why then the wrath of Heaven hath three tails,
The devil only one. [*Exit* BISHOP OF LONDON.

Enter ARCHBISHOP STIGAND.

Ask *our* Archbishop.
Stigand should know the purposes of Heaven.

STIGAND. Not I. I cannot read the face of heaven;
Perhaps our vines will grow the better for it.

LEOFWIN (*laughing*). He can but read the king's face on his coins.

STIGAND. Ay, ay, young lord, *there* the king's face is power.

GURTH. O father, mock not at a public fear,
But tell us, is this pendent hell in heaven
A harm to England?

STIGAND. Ask it of King Edward!
And he may tell thee, *I* am a harm to England.
Old uncanonical Stigand—ask of *me*
Who had my pallium from an Antipope!
Not he the man—for in our windy world
What's up is faith, what's down is heresy.
Our friends, the Normans, holp to shake his chair.
I have a Norman fever on me, son,
And cannot answer sanely . . . What it means?
Ask our broad Earl.

[*Pointing to* HAROLD, *who enters.*

HAROLD (*seeing* GAMEL). Hail, Gamel, son of Orm!
Albeit no rolling stone, my good friend Gamel,
Thou hast rounded since we met. Thy life at home
Is easier than mine here. Look! am I not
Work-wan, flesh-fallen?

GAMEL. Art thou sick, good Earl?

HAROLD. Sick as an autumn swallow for a voyage,
Sick for an idle week of hawk and hound
Beyond the seas—a change! When camest thou hither?

GAMEL. To-day, good Earl.

HAROLD. Is the North quiet, Gamel?

GAMEL. Nay, there be murmurs, for thy brother breaks us
With over-taxing—quiet, ay, as yet—
Nothing as yet.

HAROLD. Stand by him, mine old friend,
Thou art a great voice in Northumberland!
Advise him: speak him sweetly, he will hear thee.
He is passionate but honest. Stand thou by him!
More talk of this to-morrow, if yon weird sign
Not blast us in our dreams.—Well, father Stigand—

[*To* STIGAND, *who advances to him.*

STIGAND (*pointing to the comet*). War there, my son? is that the doom of England?

HAROLD. Why not the doom of all the world as well?
For all the world sees it as well as England.
These meteors came and went before our day,
Not harming any: it threatens us no more
Than French or Norman. War? the worst that follows
Things that seem jerk'd out of the common rut
Of Nature is the hot religious fool,
Who, seeing war in heaven, for heaven's credit
Makes it on earth: but look, where Edward draws
A faint foot hither, leaning upon Tostig.
He hath learnt to love our Tostig much of late.

LEOFWIN. And *he* hath learnt, despite the tiger in him,
To sleek and supple himself to the king's hand.

GURTH. I trust the kingly touch that cures the evil
May serve to charm the tiger out of him.

LEOFWIN. He hath as much of cat as tiger in him.
Our Tostig loves the hand and not the man.

HAROLD. Nay! Better die than lie!

Enter KING, QUEEN, *and* TOSTIG.

EDWARD. In heaven signs!
Signs upon earth! signs everywhere! your Priests
Gross, worldly, simoniacal, unlearn'd!
They scarce can read their Psalter; and your churches
Uncouth, unhandsome, while in Normanland
God speaks thro' abler voices, as He dwells
In statelier shrines. I say not this, as being
Half Norman-blooded, nor as some have held,
Because I love the Norman better—no,
But dreading God's revenge upon this realm
For narrowness and coldness: and I say it
For the last time perchance, before I go
To find the sweet refreshment of the Saints.
I have lived a life of utter purity:
I have builded the great church of Holy Peter:
I have wrought miracles—to God the glory—

And miracles will in my name be wrought
Hereafter.—I have fought the fight and go—
I see the flashing of the gates of pearl—
And it is well with me, tho' some of you
Have scorn'd me—ay—but after I am gone
Woe, woe to England! I have had a vision;
The seven sleepers in the cave at Ephesus
Have turn'd from right to left.

HAROLD. My most dear Master,
What matters? let them turn from left to right
And sleep again.

TOSTIG. Too hardy with thy king!
A life of prayer and fasting well may see
Deeper into the mysteries of heaven
Than thou, good brother.

ALDWYTH (*aside*). Sees he into thine,
That thou wouldst have his promise for the crown?

EDWARD. Tostig says true; my son, thou art too hard,
Not stagger'd by this ominous earth and heaven:
But heaven and earth are threads of the same loom,
Play into one another, and weave the web
That may confound thee yet.

HAROLD. Nay, I trust not,
For I have served thee long and honestly.

EDWARD. I know it, son; I am not thankless: thou

Hast broken all my foes, lighten'd for me
The weight of this poor crown, and left me time
And peace for prayer to gain a better one.
Twelve years of service! England loves thee for it.
Thou art the man to rule her!

ALDWYTH (*aside*). So, not Tostig!

HAROLD. And after those twelve years a boon, my king,
Respite, a holiday: thyself wast wont
To love the chase: thy leave to set my feet
On board, and hunt and hawk beyond the seas!

EDWARD. What, with this flaming horror overhead?

HAROLD. Well, when it passes then.

EDWARD. Ay if it pass.
Go not to Normandy—go not to Normandy.

HAROLD. And wherefore not, my king, to Normandy?
Is not my brother Wulfnoth hostage there
For my dead father's loyalty to thee?
I pray thee, let me hence and bring him home.

EDWARD. Not thee, my son: some other messenger.

HAROLD. And why not me, my lord, to Normandy?
Is not the Norman Count thy friend and mine?

EDWARD. I pray thee, do not go to Normandy.

HAROLD. Because my father drove the Normans out

Of England?—That was many a summer gone—
Forgotten and forgiven by them and thee.

EDWARD. Harold, I will not yield thee leave to go.

HAROLD. Why then to Flanders. I will hawk and hunt
In Flanders.

EDWARD. Be there not fair woods and fields
In England? Wilful, wilful. Go—the Saints
Pilot and prosper all thy wandering out
And homeward. Tostig, I am faint again.
Son Harold, I will in and pray for thee.

[*Exit, leaning on* TOSTIG, *and followed by* STIGAND, MORCAR, *and* COURTIERS.

HAROLD. What lies upon the mind of our good king
That he should harp this way on Normandy?

QUEEN. Brother, the king is wiser than he seems;
And Tostig knows it; Tostig loves the king.

HAROLD. And love should know; and—be the king so wise,—
Then Tostig too were wiser than he seems.
I love the man but not his phantasies.

Re-enter TOSTIG.

Well, brother,
When didst thou hear from thy Northumbria?

TOSTIG. When did I hear aught but this '*When*' from thee?

Leave me alone, brother, with my Northumbria:
She is *my* mistress, let *me* look to her!
The King hath made me Earl; make me not fool!
Nor make the King a fool, who made me Earl!

HAROLD. No, Tostig—lest I make myself a fool
Who made the King who made thee, make thee Earl.

TOSTIG. Why chafe me then? Thou knowest I soon go wild.

GURTH. Come, come! as yet thou art not gone so wild
But thou canst hear the best and wisest of us.

HAROLD. So says old Gurth, not I: yet hear! thine earldom,
Tostig, hath been a kingdom. Their old crown
Is yet a force among them, a sun set
But leaving light enough for Alfgar's house
To strike thee down by—nay, this ghastly glare
May heat their fancies.

TOSTIG. My most worthy brother,
Thou art the quietest man in all the world—
Ay, ay and wise in peace and great in war—
Pray God the people choose thee for their king!
But all the powers of the house of Godwin
Are not enframed in thee.

HAROLD. Thank the Saints, no!
But thou hast drain'd them shallow by thy tolls,
And thou art ever here about the King:
Thine absence well may seem a want of care.
Cling to their love; for, now the sons of Godwin
Sit topmost in the field of England, envy,
Like the rough bear beneath the tree, good brother,
Waits till the man let go.

TOSTIG. Good counsel truly!
I heard from my Northumbria yesterday.

HAROLD. How goes it then with thy Northumbria? Well?

TOSTIG. And wouldst thou that it went aught else than well?

HAROLD. I would it went as well as with mine earldom,
Leofwin's and Gurth's.

TOSTIG. Ye govern milder men.

GURTH. We have made them milder by just government.

TOSTIG. Ay, ever give yourselves your own good word.

LEOFWIN. An honest gift, by all the Saints, if giver
And taker be but honest! but they bribe
Each other, and so often, an honest world
Will not believe them.

HAROLD. I may tell thee, Tostig,
I heard from thy Northumberland to-day.

TOSTIG. From spies of thine to spy my nakedness
In my poor North!

HAROLD. There is a movement there,
A blind one—nothing yet.

TOSTIG. Crush it at once
With all the power I have!—I must—I will!—
Crush it half-born! Fool still? or wisdom there,
My wise head-shaking Harold?

HAROLD. Make not thou
The nothing something. Wisdom when in power
And wisest, should not frown as Power, but smile
As kindness, watching all, till the true *must*
Shall make her strike as Power: but when to strike—
O Tostig, O dear brother—If they prance,
Rein in, not lash them, lest they rear and run
And break both neck and axle.

TOSTIG. Good again!
Good counsel tho' scarce needed. Pour not water
In the full vessel running out at top
To swamp the house.

LEOFWIN. Nor thou be a wild thing
Out of the waste, to turn and bite the hand
Would help thee from the trap.

TOSTIG. Thou playest in tune.

LEOFWIN. To the deaf adder thee, that wilt not dance
However wisely charm'd.

TOSTIG. No more, no more!

GURTH. I likewise cry 'no more.' Unwholesome talk
For Godwin's house! Leofwin, thou hast a tongue!
Tostig, thou look'st as thou wouldst spring upon him.
St. Olaf, not while I am by! Come, come,
Join hands, let brethren dwell in unity;
Let kith and kin stand close as our shield-wall,
Who breaks us then? I say, thou hast a tongue,
And Tostig is not stout enough to bear it.
Vex him not, Leofwin.

TOSTIG. No, I am not vext,—
Altho' ye seek to vex me, one and all.
I have to make report of my good earldom
To the good king who gave it—not to you—
Not any of you.—I am not vext at all.

HAROLD. The king? the king is ever at his prayers;
In all that handles matter of the state
I am the king.

TOSTIG. That shalt thou never be
If I can thwart thee.

HAROLD. Brother, brother!

TOSTIG, Away!

[*Exit* TOSTIG.

QUEEN. Spite of this grisly star ye three must gall
Poor Tostig.

LEOFWIN. Tostig, sister, galls himself;
He cannot smell a rose but pricks his nose
Against the thorn, and rails against the rose.

QUEEN. I am the only rose of all the stock
That never thorn'd him; Edward loves him, so
Ye hate him. Harold always hated him.
Why—how they fought when boys—and, Holy Mary!
How Harold used to beat him!

HAROLD. Why, boys will fight.
Leofwin would often fight me, and I beat him.
Even old Gurth would fight. I had much ado
To hold mine own against old Gurth. Old Gurth,
We fought like great states for grave cause; but Tostig—
On a sudden—at a something—for a nothing—
The boy would fist me hard, and when we fought
I conquer'd, and he loved me none the less,
Till thou wouldst get him all apart, and tell him
That where he was but worsted, he was wrong'd.
Ah! thou hast taught the king to spoil him too;
Now the spoilt child sways both. Take heed, take heed;
Thou art the Queen; ye are boy and girl no more:
Side not with Tostig in any violence,
Lest thou be sideways guilty of the violence.

QUEEN. Come fall not foul on me. I leave thee, brother.

HAROLD. Nay, my good sister—

[*Exeunt* QUEEN, HAROLD, GURTH, *and* LEOFWIN.

ALDWYTH. Gamel, son of Orm,
What thinkest thou this means? [*Pointing to the comet.*

GAMEL. War, my dear lady,
War, waste, plague, famine, all malignities.

ALDWYTH. It means the fall of Tostig from his earldom.

GAMEL. That were too small a matter for a comet!

ALDWYTH. It means the lifting of the house of Alfgar.

GAMEL. Too small! a comet would not show for that!

ALDWYTH. Not small for thee, if thou canst compass it.

GAMEL. Thy love?

ALDWYTH. As much as I can give thee, man;
This Tostig is, or like to be, a tyrant;
Stir up thy people: oust him!

GAMEL. And thy love?

ALDWYTH. As much as thou canst bear.

GAMEL. I can bear all,
And not be giddy.

ALDWYTH. No more now: to-morrow.

SCENE II.—In the Garden. The King's House near London. Sunset.

EDITH. Mad for thy mate, passionate nightingale . . .
I love thee for it—ay, but stay a moment;
He can but stay a moment: he is going.
I fain would hear him coming! . . . near me . . near,
Somewhere—To draw him nearer with a charm
Like thine to thine.

(*Singing.*)

Love is come with a song and a smile,
Welcome Love with a smile and a song:
Love can stay but a little while.
Why cannot he stay? They call him away:
Ye do him wrong, ye do him wrong;
Love will stay for a whole life long.

Enter HAROLD.

HAROLD. The nightingales in Havering-atte-Bower
Sang out their loves so loud, that Edward's prayers
Were deafen'd and he pray'd them dumb, and thus
I dumb thee too, my wingless nightingale!

[*Kissing her.*

EDITH. Thou art my music! Would their wings were mine
To follow thee to Flanders! Must thou go?

HAROLD. Not must, but will. It is but for one moon.

EDITH. Leaving so many foes in Edward's hall
To league against thy weal. The Lady Aldwyth
Was here to-day, and when she touch'd on thee,
She stammer'd in her hate; I am sure she hates thee,
Pants for thy blood.

HAROLD. Well, I have given her cause—
I fear no woman.

EDITH. Hate not one who felt
Some pity for thy hater! I am sure
Her morning wanted sunlight, she so praised
The convent and lone life—within the pale—
Beyond the passion. Nay—she held with Edward,
At least methought she held with holy Edward,
That marriage was half sin.

HAROLD. A lesson worth
Finger and thumb—thus (*snaps his fingers*). And my answer to it—
See here—an interwoven H and E!
Take thou this ring; I will demand his ward
From Edward when I come again. Ay, would she?
She to shut up my blossom in the dark!
Thou art *my* nun, thy cloister in mine arms.

EDITH (*taking the ring*). Yea, but Earl Tostig—

HAROLD. That's a truer fear!
For if the North take fire, I should be back;
I shall be, soon enough.

EDITH. Ay, but last night
An evil dream that ever came and went—

HAROLD. A gnat that vext thy pillow! Had I been by,
I would have spoil'd his horn. My girl, what was it?

EDITH. Oh! that thou wert not going!
For so methought it was our marriage-morn,
And while we stood together, a dead man
Rose from behind the altar, tore away
My marriage ring, and rent my bridal veil;
And then I turn'd, and saw the church all fill'd
With dead men upright from their graves, and all
The dead men made at thee to murder thee,
But thou didst back thyself against a pillar,
And strike among them with thy battle-axe—
There, what a dream!

HAROLD. Well, well—a dream—no more!

EDITH. Did not Heaven speak to men in dreams of old?

HAROLD. Ay—well—of old. I tell thee what, my child;
Thou hast misread this merry dream of thine,
Taken the rifted pillars of the wood

For smooth stone columns of the sanctuary,
The shadows of a hundred fat dead deer
For dead men's ghosts. True, that the battle-axe
Was out of place; it should have been the bow.—
Come, thou shalt dream no more such dreams; I swear it,
By mine own eyes—and these two sapphires—these
Twin rubies, that are amulets against all
The kisses of all kind of womankind
In Flanders, till the sea shall roll me back
To tumble at thy feet.

EDITH. That would but shame me,
Rather than make me vain. The sea may roll
Sand, shingle, shore-weed, not the living rock
Which guards the land.

HAROLD. Except it be a soft one,
And undereaten to the fall. Mine amulet . . .
This last . . . upon thine eyelids, to shut in
A happier dream. Sleep, sleep, and thou shalt see
My grayhounds fleeting like a beam of light,
And hear my peregrine and her bells in heaven;
And other bells on earth, which yet are heaven's;
Guess what they be.

EDITH. He cannot guess who knows.
Farewell, my king.

HAROLD. Not yet, but then—my queen.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ALDWYTH *from the thicket.*

ALDWYTH. The kiss that charms thine eyelids into sleep,
Will hold mine waking. Hate him? I could love him
More, tenfold, than this fearful child can do;
Griffyth I hated: why not hate the foe
Of England? Griffyth when I saw him flee,
Chased deer-like up his mountains, all the blood
That should have only pulsed for Griffyth, beat
For his pursuer. I love him or think I love him.
If he were King of England, I his queen,
I might be sure of it. Nay, I do love him.—
She must be cloister'd somehow, lest the king
Should yield his ward to Harold's will. What harm?
She hath but blood enough to live, not love.—
When Harold goes and Tostig, shall I play
The craftier Tostig with him? fawn upon him?
Chime in with all? 'O thou more saint than king!'
And that were true enough. 'O blessed relics!'
'O Holy Peter!' If he found me thus,
Harold might hate me; he is broad and honest,
Breathing an easy gladness . . . not like Aldwyth . . .
For which I strangely love him. Should not England
Love Aldwyth, if she stay the feuds that part
The sons of Godwin from the sons of Alfgar

By such a marrying? Courage, noble Aldwyth!
Let all thy people bless thee!
Our wild Tostig,
Edward hath made him Earl: he would be king:—
The dog that snapt the shadow, dropt the bone.—
I trust he may do well, this Gamel, whom
I play upon, that he may play the note
Whereat the dog shall howl and run, and Harold
Hear the king's music, all alone with him,
Pronounced his heir of England.
I see the goal and half the way to it.—
Peace-lover is our Harold for the sake
Of England's wholeness—so—to shake the North
With earthquake and disruption—some division—
Then fling mine own fair person in the gap
A sacrifice to Harold, a peace-offering,
A scape-goat marriage—all the sins of both
The houses on mine head—then a fair life
And bless the Queen of England.

MORCAR (*coming from the thicket*). Art thou assured
By this, that Harold loves but Edith?

ALDWYTH. Morcar!
Why creep'st thou like a timorous beast of prey
Out of the bush by night?

MORCAR. I follow'd thee.

ALDWYTH. Follow my lead, and I will make thee earl.

MORCAR. What lead then?

ALDWYTH. Thou shalt flash it secretly
Among the good Northumbrian folk, that I—
That Harold loves me—yea, and presently
That I and Harold are betroth'd—and last—
Perchance that Harold wrongs me; tho' I would not
That it should come to that.

MORCAR. I will both flash
And thunder for thee.

ALDWYTH. I said 'secretly;'
It is the flash that murders, the poor thunder
Never harm'd head.

MORCAR. But thunder may bring down
That which the flash hath stricken.

ALDWYTH. Down with Tostig!
That first of all.—And when doth Harold go?

MORCAR. To-morrow—first to Bosham, then to Flanders.

ALDWYTH. Not to come back till Tostig shall have shown
And redden'd with his people's blood the teeth
That shall be broken by us—yea, and thou
Chair'd in his place. Good-night, and dream thyself
Their chosen Earl. [*Exit* ALDWYTH.

MORCAR. Earl first, and after that
Who knows I may not dream myself their king!

ACT II.

SCENE I.—SEASHORE. PONTHIEU. NIGHT.

HAROLD *and his* MEN, *wrecked.*

HAROLD. Friends, in that last inhospitable plunge
Our boat hath burst her ribs; but ours are whole;
I have but bark'd my hands.

ATTENDANT. I dug mine into
My old fast friend the shore, and clinging thus
Felt the remorseless outdraught of the deep
Haul like a great strong fellow at my legs,
And then I rose and ran. The blast that came
So suddenly hath fallen as suddenly—
Put thou the comet and this blast together—

HAROLD. Put thou thyself and mother-wit together.
Be not a fool!

Enter FISHERMEN *with torches,* HAROLD *going up to one of them,* ROLF.

Wicked sea-will-o'-the-wisp!
Wolf of the shore! dog, with thy lying lights
Thou hast betray'd us on these rocks of thine!

ROLF. Ay, but thou liest as loud as the black herring-pond behind thee. We be fishermen; I came to see after my nets.

HAROLD. To drag us into them. Fishermen? devils!

Who, while ye fish for men with your false fires,
Let the great Devil fish for your own souls.

ROLF. Nay then, we be liker the blessed Apostles; *they* were fishers of men, Father Jean says.

HAROLD. I had liefer that the fish had swallowed me,

Like Jonah, than have known there were such devils. What's to be done?

[*To his* MEN—*goes apart with them.*

FISHERMAN. Rolf, what fish did swallow Jonah?

ROLF. A whale!

FISHERMAN. Then a whale to a whelk we have swallowed the King of England. I saw him over there. Look thee, Rolf, when I was down in the fever, *she* was down with the hunger, and thou didst stand by her and give her thy crabs, and set her up again, till now, by the patient Saints, she's as crabb'd as ever.

ROLF. And I'll give her my crabs again, when thou art down again.

FISHERMAN. I thank thee, Rolf. Run thou to Count Guy; he is hard at hand. Tell him what hath

crept into our creel, and he will fee thee as freely as he will wrench this outlander's ransom out of him—and why not? for what right had he to get himself wrecked on another man's land?

ROLF. Thou art the human-heartedest, Christian-charitiest of all crab-catchers. Share and share alike!

[*Exit.*

HAROLD (*to* FISHERMAN). Fellow, dost thou catch crabs?

FISHERMAN. As few as I may in a wind, and less than I would in a calm. Ay!

HAROLD. I have a mind that thou shalt catch no more.

FISHERMAN. How?

HAROLD. I have a mind to brain thee with mine axe.

FISHERMAN. Ay, do, do, and our great Count-crab will make his nippers meet in thine heart; he'll sweat it out of thee, he'll sweat it out of thee. Look, he's here! He'll speak for himself! Hold thine own, if thou canst!

Enter GUY, COUNT OF PONTHIEU.

HAROLD. Guy, Count of Ponthieu?

GUY. Harold, Earl of Wessex!

HAROLD. Thy villains with their lying lights have wreck'd us!

GUY. Art thou not Earl of Wessex?

HAROLD. In mine earldom
A man may hang gold bracelets on a bush,
And leave them for a year, and coming back
Find them again.

GUY. Thou art a mighty man
In thine own earldom!

HAROLD. Were such murderous liars
In Wessex—if I caught them, they should hang
Cliff-gibbeted for sea-marks; our sea-mew
Winging their only wail!

GUY. Ay, but my men
Hold that the shipwreckt are accursed of God;—
What hinders me to hold with mine own men?

HAROLD. The Christian manhood of the man who reigns!

GUY. Ay, rave thy worst, but in our oubliettes
Thou shalt or rot or ransom. Hale him hence!
[*To one of his* ATTENDANTS.
Fly thou to William; tell him we have Harold.

SCENE II.—BAYEUX. PALACE.

COUNT WILLIAM *and* WILLIAM MALET.

WILLIAM. We hold our Saxon woodcock in the springe,
But he begins to flutter. As I think

He was thine host in England when I went
To visit Edward.

MALET. Yea, and there, my lord,
To make allowance for their rougher fashions,
I found him all a noble host should be.

WILLIAM. Thou art his friend: thou know'st my claim on England
Thro' Edward's promise: we have him in the toils.
And it were well, if thou shouldst let him feel,
How dense a fold of danger nets him round,
So that he bristle himself against my will.

MALET. What would I do, my lord, if I were you?

WILLIAM. What wouldst thou do?

MALET. My lord, he is thy guest.

WILLIAM. Nay, by the splendour of God, no guest of mine.
He came not to see me, had past me by
To hunt and hawk elsewhere, save for the fate
Which hunted *him* when that un-Saxon blast,
And bolts of thunder moulded in high heaven
To serve the Norman purpose, drave and crack'd
His boat on Ponthieu beach; where our friend Guy
Had wrung his ransom from him by the rack,
But that I stept between and purchased him,
Translating his captivity from Guy
To mine own hearth at Bayeux, where he sits
My ransom'd prisoner.

MALET. Well, if not with gold,
With golden deeds and iron strokes that brought
Thy war with Brittany to a goodlier close
Than else had been, he paid his ransom back.

WILLIAM. So that henceforth they are not like to league
With Harold against *me*.

MALET. A marvel, how
He from the liquid sands of Coesnon
Haled thy shore-swallow'd, armour'd Normans up
To fight for thee again!

WILLIAM. Perchance against
Their saver, save thou save him from himself.

MALET. But I should let him home again, my lord.

WILLIAM. Simple! let fly the bird within the hand,
To catch the bird again within the bush!
No.
Smooth thou my way, before he clash with me;
I want his voice in England for the crown,
I want thy voice with him to bring him round;
And being brave he must be subtly cow'd,
And being truthful wrought upon to swear
Vows that he dare not break. England our own
Thro' Harold's help, he shall be my dear friend
As well as thine, and thou thyself shalt have
Large lordship there of lands and territory.

MALET. I knew thy purpose; he and Wulfnoth never
Have met, except in public; shall they meet
In private? I have often talk'd with Wulfnoth,
And stuff'd the boy with fears that these may act
On Harold when they meet.

WILLIAM. Then let them meet!

MALET. I can but love this noble, honest Harold.

WILLIAM. Love him! why not? thine is a loving office,
I have commission'd thee to save the man:
Help the good ship, showing the sunken rock,
Or he is wreckt for ever.

Enter WILLIAM RUFUS.

WILLIAM RUFUS. Father.

WILLIAM. Well, boy.

WILLIAM RUFUS. They have taken away the toy thou gavest me,
The Norman knight.

WILLIAM. Why, boy?

WILLIAM RUFUS. Because I broke
The horse's leg—it was mine own to break;
I like to have my toys, and break them too.

WILLIAM. Well, thou shalt have another Norman knight!

WILLIAM RUFUS. And may I break his legs?

WILLIAM. Yea,—get thee gone!

WILLIAM RUFUS. I'll tell them I have had my way with thee. [*Exit.*

MALET. I never knew thee check thy will for ought
Save for the prattling of thy little ones.

WILLIAM. Who shall be kings of England. I am heir
Of England by the promise of her king.

MALET. But there the great Assembly choose their king,
The choice of England is the voice of England.

WILLIAM. I will be king of England by the laws,
The choice, and voice of England.

MALET. Can that be?

WILLIAM. The voice of any people is the sword
That guards them, or the sword that beats them down.
Here comes the would-be what I will be . . . king-like . . .
Tho' scarce at ease; for, save our meshes break,
More kinglike he than like to prove a king.

Enter HAROLD, *musing, with his eyes on the ground.*

He sees me not—and yet he dreams of me.
Earl, wilt thou fly my falcons this fair day?
They are of the best, strong-wing'd against the wind.

HAROLD (*looking up suddenly, having caught but the last word*). *Which* way does it blow?

WILLIAM. Blowing for England, ha?
Not yet. Thou hast not learnt thy quarters here.
The winds so cross and jostle among these towers.

HAROLD. Count of the Normans, thou hast ransom'd us,
Maintain'd, and entertain'd us royally!

WILLIAM. And thou for us hast fought as loyally,
Which binds us friendship-fast for ever!

HAROLD. Good!
But lest we turn the scale of courtesy
By too much pressure on it, I would fain,
Since thou hast promised Wulfnoth home with us,
Be home again with Wulfnoth.

WILLIAM. Stay—as yet
Thou hast but seen how Norman hands can strike,
But walk'd our Norman field, scarce touch'd or tasted
The splendours of our Court.

HAROLD. I am in no mood:
I should be as the shadow of a cloud
Crossing your light.

WILLIAM. Nay, rest a week or two,
And we will fill thee full of Norman sun,
And send thee back among thine island mists
With laughter.

HAROLD. Count, I thank thee, but had rather
Breathe the free wind from off our Saxon downs,
Tho' charged with all the wet of all the west.

WILLIAM. Why if thou wilt, so let it be—thou shalt.
That were a graceless hospitality
To chain the free guest to the banquet-board;
To-morrow we will ride with thee to Harfleur,
And see thee shipt, and pray in thy behalf
For happier homeward winds than that which crack'd
Thy bark at Ponthieu,—yet to us, in faith,
A happy one—whereby we came to know
Thy valour and thy value, noble earl.
Ay, and perchance a happy one for thee,
Provided—I will go with thee to-morrow—
Nay—but there be conditions, easy ones,
So thou, fair friend, will take them easily.

Enter PAGE.

PAGE. My lord, there is a post from over seas
With news for thee. [*Exit* PAGE.

WILLIAM. Come, Malet, let us hear!

[*Exeunt* COUNT WILLIAM *and* MALET.

HAROLD. Conditions? What conditions? pay him back
His ransom? 'easy'—that were easy—nay—

No money-lover he! What said the King?
'I pray you do not go to Normandy.'
And fate hath blown me hither, bound me too
With bitter obligation to the Count—
Have I not fought it out? What did he mean?
There lodged a gleaming grimness in his eyes,
Gave his shorn smile the lie. The walls oppress me,
And yon huge keep that hinders half the heaven.
Free air! free field!

[*Moves to go out. A* MAN-AT-ARMS *follows him.*

HAROLD (*to the* MAN-AT-ARMS). I need thee not. Why dost thou follow me?

MAN-AT-ARMS. I have the Count's commands to follow thee.

HAROLD. What then? Am I in danger in this court?

MAN-AT-ARMS. I cannot tell. I have the Count's commands.

HAROLD. Stand out of earshot then, and keep me still
In eyeshot.

MAN-AT-ARMS. Yea, lord Harold. [*Withdraws.*

HAROLD. And arm'd men
Ever keep watch beside my chamber door,
And if I walk within the lonely wood,
There is an arm'd man ever glides behind!

Enter MALET.

Why am I follow'd, haunted, harass'd, watch'd?
See yonder! [*Pointing to the* MAN-AT-ARMS.

MALET. 'Tis the good Count's care for thee!
The Normans love thee not, nor thou the Normans,
Or—so they deem.

HAROLD. But wherefore is the wind,
Which way soever the vane-arrow swing,
Not ever fair for England? Why but now
He said (thou heardst him) that I must not hence
Save on conditions.

MALET. So in truth he said.

HAROLD. Malet, thy mother was an Englishwoman;
There somewhere beats an English pulse in thee!

MALET. Well—for my mother's sake I love your England,
But for my father I love Normandy.

HAROLD. Speak for thy mother's sake, and tell me true.

MALET. Then for my mother's sake, and England's sake
That suffers in the daily want of thee,
Obey the Count's conditions, my good friend.

HAROLD. How, Malet, if they be not honourable!

MALET. Seem to obey them.

HAROLD. Better die than lie!

MALET. Choose therefore whether thou wilt have thy conscience
White as a maiden's hand, or whether England
Be shatter'd into fragments.

HAROLD. News from England?

MALET. Morcar and Edwin have stirr'd up the Thanes
Against thy brother Tostig's governance;
And all the North of Humber is one storm.

HAROLD. I should be there, Malet, I should be there!

MALET. And Tostig in his own hall on suspicion
Hath massacred the Thane that was his guest,
Gamel, the son of Orm: and there be more
As villainously slain.

HAROLD. The wolf! the beast!
Ill news for guests, ha, Malet! More? What more?
What do they say? did Edward know of this?

MALET. They say, his wife was knowing and abetting.

HAROLD. They say, his wife!—To marry and have no husband
Makes the wife fool. My God, I should be there.
I'll hack my way to the sea.

MALET. Thou canst not, Harold;
Our Duke is all between thee and the sea,
Our Duke is all about thee like a God;

All passes block'd. Obey him, speak him fair,
For he is only debonair to those
That follow where he leads, but stark as death
To those that cross him.—Look thou, here is Wulfnoth!
I leave thee to thy talk with him alone;
How wan, poor lad! how sick and sad for home!

[*Exit* MALET.

HAROLD (*muttering*). Go not to Normandy—go not to Normandy!

Enter WULFNOTH.

Poor brother! still a hostage!

WULFNOTH. Yea, and I
Shall see the dewy kiss of dawn no more
Make blush the maiden-white of our tall cliffs,
Nor mark the sea-bird rouse himself and hover
Above the windy ripple, and fill the sky
With free sea-laughter—never—save indeed
Thou canst make yield this iron-mooded Duke
To let me go.

HAROLD. Why, brother, so he will;
But on conditions. Canst thou guess at them?

WULFNOTH. Draw nearer,—I was in the corridor,
I saw him coming with his brother Odo
The Bayeux bishop, and I hid myself.

HAROLD. They did thee wrong who made thee hostage; thou
Wast ever fearful.

WULFNOTH. And he spoke—I heard him—
'This Harold is not of the royal blood,
Can have no right to the crown,' and Odo said,
'Thine is the right, for thine the might; he is here,
And yonder is thy keep.'

HAROLD. No, Wulfnoth, no.

WULFNOTH. And William laugh'd and swore that might was right,
Far as he knew in this poor world of ours—
'Marry, the Saints must go along with us,
And, brother, we will find a way,' said he—
Yea, yea, he would be king of England.

HAROLD. Never!

WULFNOTH. Yea, but thou must not this way answer *him*.

HAROLD. Is it not better still to speak the truth?

WULFNOTH. Not here, or thou wilt never hence nor I:
For in the racing toward this golden goal
He turns not right or left, but tramples flat
Whatever thwarts him; hast thou never heard
His savagery at Alençon,—the town
Hung out raw hides along their walls, and cried
'Work for the tanner.'

HAROLD. That had anger'd *me*
Had I been William.

WULFNOTH. Nay, but he had prisoners,
He tore their eyes out, sliced their hands away,
And flung them streaming o'er the battlements
Upon the heads of those who walk'd within—
O speak him fair, Harold, for thine own sake.

HAROLD. Your Welshman says, 'The Truth against the World,'
Much more the truth against myself.

WULFNOTH. Thyself?
But for my sake, oh brother! oh! for my sake!

HAROLD. Poor Wulfnoth! do they not entreat thee well?

WULFNOTH. I see the blackness of my dungeon loom
Across their lamps of revel, and beyond
The merriest murmurs of their banquet clank
The shackles that will bind me to the wall.

HAROLD. Too fearful still!

WULFNOTH. Oh no, no—speak him fair!
Call it to temporize; and not to lie;
Harold, I do not counsel thee to lie.
The man that hath to foil a murderous aim
May, surely, play with words.

HAROLD. Words are the man.
Not ev'n for thy sake, brother, would I lie.

WULFNOTH. Then for thine Edith?

HAROLD. There thou prick'st me deep.

WULFNOTH. And for our Mother England?

HAROLD. Deeper still.

WULFNOTH. And deeper still the deep-down oubliette,
Down thirty feet below the smiling day—
In blackness—dogs' food thrown upon thy head.
And over thee the suns arise and set,
And the lark sings, the sweet stars come and go,
And men are at their markets, in their fields,
And woo their loves and have forgotten thee;
And thou art upright in thy living grave,
Where there is barely room to shift thy side,
And all thine England hath forgotten thee;
And he our lazy-pious Norman King,
With all his Normans round him once again,
Counts his old beads, and hath forgotten thee.

HAROLD. Thou art of my blood, and so methinks, my boy,
Thy fears infect me beyond reason. Peace!

WULFNOTH. And then our fiery Tostig, while thy hands
Are palsied here, if his Northumbrians rise
And hurl him from them,—I have heard the Normans
Count upon this confusion—may he not make
A league with William, so to bring him back?

HAROLD. That lies within the shadow of the chance.

WULFNOTH. And like a river in flood thro' a burst dam

Descends the ruthless Norman—our good King
Kneels mumbling some old bone—our helpless folk
Are wash'd away, wailing, in their own blood—

HAROLD. Wailing! not warring? Boy, thou hast forgotten
That thou art English.

WULFNOTH. Then our modest women—
I know the Norman license—thine own Edith—

HAROLD. No more! I will not hear thee—William comes.

WULFNOTH. I dare not well be seen in talk with thee.
Make thou not mention that I spake with thee.

[*Moves away to the back of the stage.*

Enter WILLIAM, MALET, *and* OFFICER.

OFFICER. We have the man that rail'd against thy birth.

WILLIAM. Tear out his tongue.

OFFICER. He shall not rail again
He said that he should see confusion fall
On thee and on thine house.

WILLIAM. Tear out his eyes,
And plunge him into prison.

OFFICER. It shall be done.

[*Exit* OFFICER.

WILLIAM. Look not amazed, fair earl! Better leave undone
Than do by halves—tongueless and eyeless, prison'd—

HAROLD. Better methinks have slain the man at once!

WILLIAM. We have respect for man's immortal soul,
We seldom take man's life, except in war;
It frights the traitor more to maim and blind.

HAROLD. In mine own land I should have scorn'd the man,
Or lash'd his rascal back, and let him go.

WILLIAM. And let him go? To slander thee again!
Yet in thine own land in thy father's day
They blinded my young kinsman, Alfred—ay,
Some said it was thy father's deed.

HAROLD. They lied.

WILLIAM. But thou and he—whom at thy word, for thou
Art known a speaker of the truth, I free
From this foul charge—

HAROLD. Nay, nay, he freed himself
By oath and compurgation from the charge.
The king, the lords, the people clear'd him of it.

WILLIAM. But thou and he drove our good Normans out
From England, and this rankles in us yet.
Archbishop Robert hardly scaped with life.
HAROLD. Archbishop Robert! Robert the Archbishop!
Robert of Jumiéges, he that—
MALET. Quiet! quiet!
HAROLD. Count! if there sat within the Norman chair
A ruler all for England—one who fill'd
All offices, all bishopricks with English—
We could not move from Dover to the Humber
Saving thro' Norman bishopricks—I say
Ye would applaud that Norman who should drive
The stranger to the fiends!
WILLIAM. Why, that is reason!
Warrior thou art, and mighty wise withal!
Ay, ay, but many among our Norman lords
Hate thee for this, and press upon me—saying
God and the sea have given thee to our hands—
To plunge thee into life-long prison here:—
Yet I hold out against them, as I may,
Yea—would hold out, yea, tho' they should revolt—
For thou hast done the battle in my cause;
I am thy fastest friend in Normandy.

HAROLD. I am doubly bound to thee . . . if this be so.

WILLIAM. And I would bind thee more, and would myself
Be bounden to thee more.

HAROLD. Then let me hence
With Wulfnoth to King Edward.

WILLIAM. So we will.
We hear he hath not long to live.

HAROLD. It may be.

WILLIAM. Why then the heir of England, who is he?

HAROLD. The Atheling is nearest to the throne.

WILLIAM. But sickly, slight, half-witted and a child,
Will England have him king?

HAROLD. It may be, no.

WILLIAM. And hath King Edward not pronounced his heir?

HAROLD. Not that I know.

WILLIAM. When he was here in Normandy,
He loved us and we him, because we found him
A Norman of the Normans.

HAROLD. So did we.

WILLIAM. A gentle, gracious, pure and saintly man!
And grateful to the hand that shielded him,
He promised that if ever he were king

In England, he would give his kingly voice
To me as his successor. Knowest thou this?

HAROLD. I learn it now.

WILLIAM. Thou knowest I am his cousin,
And that my wife descends from Alfred?

HAROLD. Ay.

WILLIAM. Who hath a better claim then to the crown
So that ye will not crown the Atheling?

HAROLD. None that I know . . . if that but hung upon
King Edward's will.

WILLIAM. Wilt *thou* uphold my claim?

MALET (*aside to* HAROLD). Be careful of thine answer, my good friend.

WULFNOTH (*aside to* HAROLD). Oh! Harold, for my sake and for thine own!

HAROLD. Ay . . . if the king have not revoked his promise.

WILLIAM. But hath he done it then?

HAROLD. Not that I know.

WILLIAM. Good, good, and thou wilt help me to the crown?

HAROLD. Ay . . . if the Witan will consent to this.

WILLIAM. Thou art the mightiest voice in England, man,
Thy voice will lead the Witan—shall I have it?

WULFNOTH (*aside to* HAROLD). Oh! Harold, if thou love thine Edith, ay.

HAROLD. Ay, if—

MALET (*aside to* HAROLD). Thine 'ifs' will sear thine eyes out—ay.

WILLIAM. I ask thee, wilt thou help me to the crown?

And I will make thee my great Earl of Earls,
Foremost in England and in Normandy;
Thou shalt be verily king—all but the name—
For I shall most sojourn in Normandy;
And thou be my vice-king in England. Speak.

WULFNOTH (*aside to* HAROLD). Ay, brother—for the sake of England—ay.

HAROLD. My lord—

MALET (*aside to* HAROLD). Take heed now.

HAROLD. Ay.

WILLIAM. I am content,
For thou art truthful, and thy word thy bond.
To-morrow will we ride with thee to Harfleur.

[*Exit* WILLIAM.

MALET. Harold, I am thy friend, one life with thee,
And even as I should bless thee saving mine,
I thank thee now for having saved thyself.

[*Exit* MALET.

HAROLD. For having lost myself to save myself,

Said 'ay' when I meant 'no,' lied like a lad
That dreads the pendent scourge, said 'ay' for 'no'!
Ay! No!—he hath not bound me by an oath—
Is 'ay' an oath? is 'ay' strong as an oath?
Or is it the same sin to break my word
As break mine oath? He call'd my word my bond!
He is a liar who knows I am a liar,
And makes believe that he believes my word—
The crime be on his head—not bounden—no.

[*Suddenly doors are flung open, discovering in an inner hall* COUNT WILLIAM *in his state robes, seated upon his throne, between two* BISHOPS, ODO OF BAYEUX *being one: in the centre of the hall an ark covered with cloth of gold; and on either side of it the* NORMAN BARONS.

Enter a JAILOR *before* WILLIAM'S *throne.*

WILLIAM (*to* JAILOR). Knave, hast thou let thy prisoner scape?

JAILOR. Sir Count,
He had but one foot, he must have hopt away,
Yea, some familiar spirit must have help'd him.

WILLIAM. Woe knave to thy familiar and to thee!
Give me thy keys. [*They fall clashing.*
Nay let them lie. Stand there and wait my will.

[*The* JAILOR *stands aside.*

WILLIAM (*to* HAROLD). Hast thou such trustless jailors in thy North?

HAROLD. We have few prisoners in mine earldom there,
So less chance for false keepers.

WILLIAM. We have heard
Of thy just, mild, and equal governance;
Honour to thee! thou art perfect in all honour!
Thy naked word thy bond! confirm it now
Before our gather'd Norman baronage,
For they will not believe thee—as I believe.

[*Descends from his throne and stands by the ark.*
Let all men here bear witness of our bond!

[*Beckons to* HAROLD, *who advances.*

Enter MALET *behind him.*

Lay thou thy hand upon this golden pall!
Behold the jewel of St. Pancratius
Woven into the gold. Swear thou on this!

HAROLD. What should I swear? Why should I swear on this?

WILLIAM (*savagely*). Swear thou to help me to the crown of England.

MALET (*whispering* HAROLD). My friend, thou hast gone too far to palter now.

WULFNOTH (*whispering* HAROLD). Swear thou to-day, to-morrow is thine own.

HAROLD. I swear to help thee to the crown of England . . .

According as King Edward promises.

WILLIAM. Thou must swear absolutely, noble Earl.

MALET (*whispering*). Delay is death to thee, ruin to England.

WULFNOTH (*whispering*). Swear, dearest brother, I beseech thee, swear!

HAROLD (*putting his hand on the jewel*). I swear to help thee to the crown of England.

WILLIAM. Thanks, truthful Earl; I did not doubt thy word,

But that my barons might believe thy word,
And that the Holy Saints of Normandy
When thou art home in England, with thine own,
Might strengthen thee in keeping of thy word,
I made thee swear.—Show him by whom he hath sworn.

[*The two* BISHOPS *advance, and raise the cloth of gold. The bodies and bones of Saints are seen lying in the ark.*

The holy bones of all the Canonised
From all the holiest shrines in Normandy!

HAROLD. Horrible! [*They let the cloth fall again.*

WILLIAM. Ay, for thou hast sworn an oath

Which, if not kept, would make the hard earth rive
To the very Devil's horns, the bright sky cleave
To the very feet of God, and send her hosts
Of injured Saints to scatter sparks of plague
Thro' all your cities, blast your infants, dash
The torch of war among your standing corn,
Dabble your hearths with your own blood.—Enough!
Thou wilt not break it! I, the Count—the King—
Thy friend—am grateful for thine honest oath,
Not coming fiercely like a conqueror, now,
But softly as a bridegroom to his own.
For I shall rule according to your laws,
And make your ever-jarring Earldoms move
To music and in order—Angle, Jute,
Dane, Saxon, Norman, help to build a throne
Out-towering hers of France . . . The wind is fair
For England now . . . To-night we will be merry.
To-morrow will I ride with thee to Harfleur.

[*Exeunt* WILLIAM *and all the* NORMAN BARONS, *etc.*

HAROLD. To-night we will be merry—and to-morrow—
Juggler and bastard—bastard—he hates that most—
William the tanner's bastard! Would he heard me!
O God, that I were in some wide, waste field
With nothing but my battle-axe and him
To spatter his brains! Why let earth rive, gulf in
These cursed Normans—yea and mine own self.

Cleave heaven, and send thy saints that I may say
Ev'n to their faces, 'If ye side with William
Ye are not noble.' How their pointed fingers
Glared at me! Am I Harold, Harold, son
Of our great Godwin? Lo! I touch mine arms,
My limbs—they are not mine—they are a liar's—
I mean to be a liar—I am not bound—
Stigand shall give me absolution for it—
Did the chest move? did it move? I am utter craven!
O Wulfnoth, Wulfnoth, brother, thou hast betray'd me!

WULFNOTH. Forgive me, brother, I will live here and die.

Enter PAGE.

PAGE. My lord! the Duke awaits thee at the banquet.

HAROLD. Where they eat dead men's flesh, and drink their blood.

PAGE. My lord—

HAROLD. I know your Norman cookery is so spiced,
It masks all this.

PAGE. My lord! thou art white as death.

HAROLD. With looking on the dead. Am I so white?
Thy Duke will seem the darker. Hence, I follow.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The King's Palace. London.

King Edward *dying on a couch, and by him standing the* Queen, Harold, Archbishop Stigand, Gurth, Leofwin, Archbishop Aldred, Aldwyth, *and* Edith.

Stigand. Sleeping or dying there? If this be death,
Then our great Council wait to crown thee King—
Come hither, I have a power; [*To* Harold.
They call me near, for I am close to thee
And England—I, old shrivell'd Stigand, I,
Dry as an old wood-fungus on a dead tree,
I have a power!
See here this little key about my neck!
There lies a treasure buried down in Ely:
If e'er the Norman grow too hard for thee,
Ask me for this at thy most need, son Harold,
At thy most need—not sooner.

HAROLD. So I will.

STIGAND. Red gold—a hundred purses—yea, and more!

If thou canst make a wholesome use of these
To chink against the Norman, I do believe
My old crook'd spine would bud out two young wings
To fly to heaven straight with.

HAROLD. Thank thee, father!
Thou art English, Edward too is English now,
He hath clean repented of his Normanism.

STIGAND. Ay, as the libertine repents who cannot
Make done undone, when thro' his dying sense
Shrills 'lost thro' thee.' They have built their castles here;
Our priories are Norman; the Norman adder
Hath bitten us; we are poison'd: our dear England
Is demi-Norman. He!—

[*Pointing to* KING EDWARD, *sleeping.*

HAROLD. I would I were
As holy and as passionless as he!
That I might rest as calmly! Look at him—
The rosy face, and long down-silvering beard,
The brows unwrinkled as a summer mere.—

STIGAND. A summer mere with sudden wreckful gusts
From a side-gorge. Passionless? How he flamed
When Tostig's anger'd earldom flung him, nay,

He fain had calcined all Northumbria
To one black ash, but that thy patriot passion
Siding with our great Council against Tostig,
Out-passion'd his! Holy? ay, ay, forsooth,
A conscience for his own soul, not his realm;
A twilight conscience lighted thro' a chink;
Thine by the sun; nay, by some sun to be,
When all the world hath learnt to speak the truth,
And lying were self-murder by that state
Which was the exception.

HAROLD. That sun may God speed!

STIGAND. Come, Harold, shake the cloud off!

HAROLD. Can I, father?
Our Tostig parted cursing me and England;
Our sister hates us for his banishment;
He hath gone to kindle Norway against England,
And Wulfnoth is alone in Normandy.
For when I rode with William down to Harfleur,
'Wulfnoth is sick,' he said; 'he cannot follow;'
Then with that friendly-fiendly smile of his,
'We have learnt to love him, let him a little longer
Remain a hostage for the loyalty
Of Godwin's house.' As far as touches Wulfnoth
I that so prized plain word and naked truth
Have sinn'd against it—all in vain.

LEOFWIN. Good brother,
By all the truths that ever priest hath preach'd,

Of all the lies that ever men have lied,
Thine is the pardonablest.

HAROLD. May be so!

I think it so, I think I am a fool
To think it can be otherwise than so.

STIGAND. Tut, tut, I have absolved thee: dost thou scorn me,
Because I had my Canterbury pallium,
From one whom they dispoped?

HAROLD. No, Stigand, no!

STIGAND. Is naked truth actable in true life?
I have heard a saying of thy father Godwin,
That, were a man of state nakedly true,
Men would but take him for the craftier liar.

LEOFWIN. Be men less delicate than the Devil himself!
I thought that naked Truth would shame the Devil,
The Devil is so modest.

GURTH. He never said it!

LEOFWIN. Be thou not stupid-honest, brother Gurth!

HAROLD. Better to be a liar's dog, and hold
My master honest, than believe that lying
And ruling men are fatal twins that cannot
Move one without the other. Edward wakes!—
Dazed—he hath seen a vision.

EDWARD. The green tree!

Then a great Angel past along the highest
Crying 'the doom of England,' and at once
He stood beside me, in his grasp a sword
Of lightnings, wherewithal he cleft the tree
From off the bearing trunk, and hurl'd it from him
Three fields away, and then he dash'd and drench'd,
He dyed, he soak'd the trunk with human blood,
And brought the sunder'd tree again, and set it
Straight on the trunk, that thus baptized in blood
Grew ever high and higher, beyond my seeing,
And shot out sidelong boughs across the deep
That dropt themselves, and rooted in far isles
Beyond my seeing: and the great Angel rose
And past again along the highest crying
'The doom of England!'—Tostig, raise my head!

[*Falls back senseless.*

HAROLD (*raising him*). Let Harold serve for Tostig!

QUEEN. Harold served
Tostig so ill, he cannot serve for Tostig!
Ay, raise his head, for thou hast laid it low!
The sickness of our saintly king, for whom
My prayers go up as fast as my tears fall,
I well believe, hath mainly drawn itself
From lack of Tostig—thou hast banish'd him.

HAROLD. Nay—but the council, and the king himself.

QUEEN. Thou hatest him, hatest him.

HAROLD (*coldly*). Ay—Stigand, unriddle
This vision, canst thou?

STIGAND. Dotage!

EDWARD (*starting up*). It is finish'd.
I have built the Lord a house—the Lord hath dwelt
In darkness. I have built the Lord a house—
Palms, flowers, pomegranates, golden cherubim
With twenty-cubit wings from wall to wall—
I have built the Lord a house—sing, Asaph! clash
The cymbal, Heman! blow the trumpet, priest!
Fall, cloud, and fill the house—lo! my two pillars,
Jachin and Boaz!— [*Seeing* HAROLD *and* GURTH.
Harold, Gurth,—where am I?
Where is the charter of our Westminster?

STIGAND. It lies beside thee, king, upon thy bed.

EDWARD. Sign, sign at once—take, sign it, Stigand,
Aldred!
Sign it, my good son Harold, Gurth, and Leofwin,
Sign it, my queen!

ALL. We have sign'd it.

EDWARD. It is finish'd!
The kingliest Abbey in all Christian lands,
The lordliest, loftiest minster ever built
To Holy Peter in our English isle!
Let me be buried there, and all our kings,
And all our just and wise and holy men

That shall be born hereafter. It is finish'd!
Hast thou had absolution for thine oath? [*To* HAROLD.

HAROLD. Stigand hath given me absolution for it.

EDWARD. Stigand is not canonical enough
To save thee from the wrath of Norman Saints.

STIGAND. Norman enough! Be there no Saints of England
To help us from their brethren yonder?

EDWARD. Prelate,
The Saints are one, but those of Normanland
Are mightier than our own. Ask it of Aldred.
[*To* HAROLD.

ALDRED. It shall be granted him, my king; for he
Who vows a vow to strangle his own mother
Is guiltier keeping this, than breaking it.

EDWARD. O friends, I shall not overlive the day.

STIGAND. Why then the throne is empty. Who inherits?
For tho' we be not bound by the king's voice
In making of a king, yet the king's voice
Is much toward his making. Who inherits?
Edgar the Atheling?

EDWARD. No, no, but Harold.
I love him: he hath served me: none but he
Can rule all England. Yet the curse is on him
For swearing falsely by those blessed bones;
He did not mean to keep his vow.

HAROLD. Not mean
To make our England Norman.
EDWARD. There spake Godwin,
Who hated all the Normans; but their Saints
Have heard thee, Harold.
EDITH. Oh! my lord, my king!
He knew not whom he sware by.
EDWARD. Yea, I know
He knew not, but those heavenly ears have heard,
Their curse is on him; wilt thou bring another,
Edith, upon his head?
EDITH. No, no, not I.
EDWARD. Why then, thou must not wed him.
HAROLD. Wherefore, wherefore?
EDWARD. O son, when thou didst tell me of thine oath,
I sorrow'd for my random promise given
To yon fox-lion. I did not dream then
I should be king.—My son, the Saints are virgins;
They love the white rose of virginity,
The cold, white lily blowing in her cell:
I have been myself a virgin; and I sware
To consecrate my virgin here to heaven—
The silent, cloister'd, solitary life,
A life of life-long prayer against the curse
That lies on thee and England.
HAROLD. No, no, no.

EDWARD. Treble denial of the tongue of flesh,
Like Peter's when he fell, and thou wilt have
To wail for it like Peter. O my son!
Are all oaths to be broken then, all promises
Made in our agony for help from heaven?
Son, there is one who loves thee: and a wife,
What matters who, so she be serviceable
In all obedience, as mine own hath been:
God bless thee, wedded daughter.

[*Laying his hand on the* QUEEN'S *head.*

QUEEN. Bless thou too
That brother whom I love beyond the rest,
My banish'd Tostig.

EDWARD. All the sweet Saints bless him!
Spare and forbear him, Harold, if he comes!
And let him pass unscathed; he loves me, Harold!
Be kindly to the Normans left among us,
Who follow'd me for love! and dear son, swear
When thou art king, to see my solemn vow
Accomplish'd.

HAROLD. Nay, dear lord, for I have sworn
Not to swear falsely twice.

EDWARD. Thou wilt not swear?

HAROLD. I cannot.

EDWARD. Then on thee remains the curse,
Harold, if thou embrace her: and on thee,
Edith, if thou abide it,—

[*The* KING *swoons;* EDITH *falls and kneels by the couch.*

STIGAND. He hath swoon'd!
Death? . . . no, as yet a breath.

HAROLD. Look up! look up!
Edith!

ALDRED. Confuse her not; she hath begun
Her life-long prayer for thee.

ALDWYTH. O noble Harold,
I would thou couldst have sworn.

HAROLD. For thine own pleasure?

ALDWYTH. No, but to please our dying king, and those
Who make thy good their own—all England, Earl.

ALDRED. *I* would thou couldst have sworn. Our holy king
Hath given his virgin lamb to Holy Church
To save thee from the curse.

HAROLD. Alas! poor man,
His promise brought it on me.

ALDRED. O good son!
That knowledge made him all the carefuller
To find a means whereby the curse might glance
From thee and England.

HAROLD. Father, we so loved—

ALDRED. The more the love, the mightier is the prayer;
The more the love, the more acceptable

The sacrifice of both your loves to heaven.
No sacrifice to heaven, no help from heaven;
That runs thro' all the faiths of all the world.
And sacrifice there must be, for the king
Is holy, and hath talk'd with God, and seen
A shadowing horror; there are signs in heaven—

HAROLD. Your comet came and went.

ALDRED. And signs on earth!
Knowest thou Senlac hill?

HAROLD. I know all Sussex;
A good entrenchment for a perilous hour!

ALDRED. Pray God that come not suddenly! There is one
Who passing by that hill three nights ago—
He shook so that he scarce could out with it—
Heard, heard—

HAROLD. The wind in his hair?

ALDRED. A ghostly horn
Blowing continually, and faint battle-hymns,
And cries, and clashes, and the groans of men;
And dreadful shadows strove upon the hill,
And dreadful lights crept up from out the marsh—
Corpse-candles gliding over nameless graves—

HAROLD. At Senlac?

ALDRED. Senlac.

EDWARD (*waking*). Senlac! Sanguelac,
The Lake of Blood!

STIGAND. This lightning before death
Plays on the word,—and Normanizes too!

HAROLD. Hush, father, hush!

EDWARD. Thou uncanonical fool,
Wilt *thou* play with the thunder? North and South
Thunder together, showers of blood are blown
Before a never-ending blast, and hiss
Against the blaze they cannot quench—a lake,
A sea of blood—we are drown'd in blood—for God
Has fill'd the quiver, and Death has drawn the bow—
Sanguelac! Sanguelac! the arrow! the arrow! [*Dies.*

STIGAND. It is the arrow of death in his own heart—
And our great Council wait to crown thee King.

SCENE II.—IN THE GARDEN. THE KING'S HOUSE NEAR LONDON.

EDITH. Crown'd, crown'd and lost, crown'd King
—and lost to me!

(*Singing.*)

Two young lovers in winter weather,
None to guide them,
Walk'd at night on the misty heather;
Night, as black as a raven's feather;
Both were lost and found together,
None beside them.

That is the burthen of it—lost and found
Together in the cruel river Swale
A hundred years ago; and there's another,

Lost, lost, the light of day,

To which the lover answers lovingly

'I am beside thee.'
Lost, lost, we have lost the way.
'Love, I will guide thee.'
Whither, O whither? into the river,
Where we two may be lost together,
And lost for ever? 'Oh! never, oh! never,
Tho' we be lost and be found together.'

Some think they loved within the pale forbidden
By Holy Church: but who shall say? the truth
Was lost in that fierce North, where *they* were lost,
Where all good things are lost, where Tostig lost
The good hearts of his people. It is Harold!

Enter HAROLD.

Harold the King!

HAROLD. Call me not King, but Harold.

EDITH. Nay, thou art King!

HAROLD. Thine, thine, or King or churl!
My girl, thou hast been weeping: turn not thou

Thy face away, but rather let me be
King of the moment to thee, and command
That kiss my due when subject, which will make
My kingship kinglier to me than to reign
King of the world without it.

EDITH. Ask me not,
Lest I should yield it, and the second curse
Descend upon thine head, and thou be only
King of the moment over England.

HAROLD. Edith,
Tho' somewhat less a king to my true self
Than ere they crown'd me one, for I have lost
Somewhat of upright stature thro' mine oath,
Yet thee I would not lose, and sell not thou
Our living passion for a dead man's dream;
Stigand believed he knew not what he spake.
Oh God! I cannot help it, but at times
They seem to me too narrow, all the faiths
Of this grown world of ours, whose baby eye
Saw them sufficient. Fool and wise, I fear
This curse, and scorn it. But a little light!—
And on it falls the shadow of the priest;
Heaven yield us more! for better, Woden, all
Our cancell'd warrior-gods, our grim Walhalla,
Eternal war, than that the Saints at peace
The Holiest of our Holiest one should be
This William's fellow-tricksters;—better die

Than credit this, for death is death, or else
Lifts us beyond the lie. Kiss me—thou art not
A holy sister yet, my girl, to fear
There might be more than brother in my kiss,
And more than sister in thine own.

EDITH. I dare not.

HAROLD. Scared by the church—'Love for a whole life long.'
When was that sung?

EDITH. Here to the nightingales.

HAROLD. Their anthems of no church, how sweet they are!
Nor kingly priest, nor priestly king to cross
Their billings ere they nest.

EDITH. They are but of spring,
They fly the winter change—not so with us—
No wings to come and go.

HAROLD. But wing'd souls flying
Beyond all change and in the eternal distance
To settle on the Truth.

EDITH. They are not so true,
They change their mates.

HAROLD. Do they? I did not know it.

EDITH. They say thou art to wed the Lady Aldwyth.

HAROLD. They say, they say.

EDITH. If this be politic,

And well for thee and England—and for her—
Care not for me who love thee.

GURTH (*calling*). Harold, Harold!

HAROLD. The voice of Gurth! (*Enter* GURTH.)
Good even, my good brother!

GURTH. Good even, gentle Edith.

EDITH. Good even, Gurth.

GURTH. Ill news hath come! Our hapless brother, Tostig—
He, and the giant King of Norway, Harold
Hardrada—Scotland, Ireland, Iceland, Orkney,
Are landed North of Humber, and in a field
So packt with carnage that the dykes and brooks
Were bridged and damm'd with dead, have overthrown
Morcar and Edwin.

HAROLD. Well then, we must fight.
How blows the wind?

GURTH. Against St. Valery
And William.

HAROLD. Well then, we will to the North.

GURTH. Ay, but worse news: this William sent to Rome,
Swearing thou swarest falsely by his Saints:
The Pope and that Archdeacon Hildebrand
His master, heard him, and have sent him back
A holy gonfanon, and a blessed hair
Of Peter, and all France, all Burgundy,

Poitou, all Christendom is raised against thee;
He hath cursed thee, and all those who fight for thee,
And given thy realm of England to the bastard.

HAROLD. Ha! ha!

EDITH. Oh! laugh not! . . . Strange and ghastly in the gloom
And shadowing of this double thunder-cloud
That lours on England—laughter!

HAROLD. No, not strange!
This was old human laughter in old Rome
Before a Pope was born, when that which reign'd
Call'd itself God.—A kindly rendering
Of 'Render unto Cæsar.' . . . The Good Shepherd!
Take this, and render that.

GURTH. They have taken York.

HAROLD. The Lord was God and came as man—the Pope
Is man and comes as God.—York taken?

GURTH. Yea,
Tostig hath taken York!

HAROLD. To York then. Edith,
Hadst thou been braver, I had better braved
All—but I love thee and thou me—and that
Remains beyond all chances and all churches,
And that thou knowest.

EDITH. Ay, but take back thy ring.

It burns my hand—a curse to thee and me.
I dare not wear it.

[*Proffers* HAROLD *the ring, which he takes.*

HAROLD. But I dare. God with thee!

[*Exeunt* HAROLD *and* GURTH.

EDITH. The King hath cursed him, if he marry me;
The Pope hath cursed him, marry me or no!
God help me! I know nothing—can but pray
For Harold—pray, pray, pray—no help but prayer,
A breath that fleets beyond this iron world,
And touches Him that made it.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—In Northumbria.

Archbishop Aldred, Morcar, Edwin, *and* Forces. *Enter* Harold. *The standard of the golden Dragon of Wessex preceding him.*

Harold. What! are thy people sullen from defeat?
Our Wessex dragon flies beyond the Humber,
No voice to greet it.

Edwin. Let not our great king
Believe us sullen—only shamed to the quick
Before the king—as having been so bruised
By Harold, king of Norway; but our help
Is Harold, king of England. Pardon us, thou!
Our silence is our reverence for the king!

Harold. Earl of the Mercians! if the truth be gall,
Cram me not thou with honey, when our good hive
Needs every sting to save it.

Voices. Aldwyth! Aldwyth!

HAROLD. Why cry thy people on thy sister's name?

MORCAR. She hath won upon our people thro' her beauty,
And pleasantness among them.

VOICES. Aldwyth, Aldwyth!

HAROLD. They shout as they would have her for a queen.

MORCAR. She hath followed with our host, and suffer'd all.

HAROLD. What would ye, men?

VOICE. Our old Northumbrian crown,
And kings of our own choosing.

HAROLD. Your old crown
Were little help without our Saxon carles
Against Hardrada.

VOICE. Little! we are Danes,
Who conquer'd what we walk on, our own field.

HAROLD. They have been plotting here! [*Aside.*

VOICE. He calls us little!

HAROLD. The kingdoms of this world began with little,
A hill, a fort, a city—that reach'd a hand
Down to the field beneath it, 'Be thou mine,'
Then to the next, 'Thou also!' If the field
Cried out 'I am mine own;' another hill
Or fort, or city, took it, and the first
Fell, and the next became an Empire.

VOICE. Yet
Thou art but a West Saxon: *we* are Danes!

HAROLD. My mother is a Dane, and I am English;
There is a pleasant fable in old books,
Ye take a stick, and break it; bind a score
All in one faggot, snap it over knee,
Ye cannot.

VOICE. Hear King Harold! he says true!

HAROLD. Would ye be Norsemen?

VOICES. No!

HAROLD. Or Norman?

VOICES. No!

HAROLD. Snap not the faggot-band then.

VOICE. That is true!

VOICE. Ay, but thou art not kingly, only grandson
To Wulfnoth, a poor cow-herd.

HAROLD. This old Wulfnoth
Would take me on his knees and tell me tales
Of Alfred and of Athelstan the Great
Who drove you Danes; and yet he held that Dane,
Jute, Angle, Saxon, were or should be all
One England, for this cow-herd, like my father,
Who shook the Norman scoundrels off the throne,
Had in him kingly thoughts—a king of men,
Not made but born, like the great king of all,
A light among the oxen.

VOICE. That is true!

VOICE. Ay, and I love him now, for mine own father
Was great, and cobbled.

VOICE. Thou art Tostig's brother,
Who wastes the land.

HAROLD. This brother comes to save
Your land from waste; I saved it once before,
For when your people banish'd Tostig hence,
And Edward would have sent a host against you,
Then I, who loved my brother, bad the king
Who doted on him, sanction your decree
Of Tostig's banishment, and choice of Morcar,
To help the realm from scattering.

VOICE. King! thy brother,
If one may dare to speak the truth, was wrong'd.
Wild was he, born so: but the plots against him
Had madden'd tamer men.

MORCAR. Thou art one of those
Who brake into Lord Tostig's treasure-house
And slew two hundred of his following,
And now, when Tostig hath come back with power,
Are frighted back to Tostig.

OLD THANE. Ugh! Plots and feuds!
This is my ninetieth birthday. Can ye not
Be brethren? Godwin still at feud with Alfgar,
And Alfgar hates King Harold. Plots and feuds!
This is my ninetieth birthday!

HAROLD. Old man, Harold
Hates nothing; not *his* fault, if our two houses
Be less than brothers.

VOICES. Aldwyth, Harold, Aldwyth!

HAROLD. Again! Morcar! Edwin! What do they mean?

EDWIN. So the good king would deign to lend an ear
Not overscornful, we might chance—perchance—
To guess their meaning.

MORCAR. Thine own meaning, Harold,
To make all England one, to close all feuds,
Mixing our bloods, that thence a king may rise
Half-Godwin and half-Alfgar, one to rule
All England beyond question, beyond quarrel.

HAROLD. Who sow'd this fancy here among the people?

MORCAR. Who knows what sows itself among the people?
A goodly flower at times.

HAROLD. The Queen of Wales?
Why, Morcar, it is all but duty in her
To hate me; I have heard she hates me.

MORCAR. No!
For I can swear to that, but cannot swear
That these will follow thee against the Norsemen,
If thou deny them this.

HAROLD. Morcar and Edwin,
When will ye cease to plot against my house?

EDWIN. The king can scarcely dream that we, who know
His prowess in the mountains of the West,
Should care to plot against him in the North.

MORCAR. Who dares arraign us, king, of such a plot?

HAROLD. Ye heard one witness even now.

MORCAR. The craven!
There is a faction risen again for Tostig,
Since Tostig came with Norway—fright not love.

HAROLD. Morcar and Edwin, will ye, if I yield,
Follow against the Norseman?

MORCAR. Surely, surely!

HAROLD. Morcar and Edwin, will ye upon oath,
Help us against the Norman?

MORCAR. With good will;
Yea, take the Sacrament upon it, king.

HAROLD. Where is thy sister?

MORCAR. Somewhere hard at hand.
Call and she comes.

[*One goes out, then enter* ALDWYTH.

HAROLD. I doubt not but thou knowest
Why thou art summon'd.

ALDWYTH. Why?—I stay with these,
Lest thy fierce Tostig spy me out alone,
And flay me all alive.

HAROLD. Canst thou love one
Who did discrown thine husband, unqueen thee?
Didst thou not love thine husband?

ALDWYTH. Oh! my lord,
The nimble, wild, red, wiry, savage king—
That was, my lord, a match of policy.

HAROLD. Was it?
I knew him brave: he loved his land: he fain
Had made her great: his finger on her harp
(I heard him more than once) had in it Wales,
Her floods, her woods, her hills: had I been his,
I had been all Welsh.

ALDWYTH. Oh, ay—all Welsh—and yet
I saw thee drive him up his hills—and women
Cling to the conquer'd, if they love, the more;
If not, they cannot hate the conqueror.
We never—oh! good Morcar, speak for us,
His conqueror conquer'd Aldwyth.

HAROLD. Goodly news!

MORCAR. Doubt it not thou! Since Griffyth's head was sent
To Edward, she hath said it.

HAROLD. I had rather
She would have loved her husband. Aldwyth, Aldwyth,
Canst thou love me, thou knowing where I love?

ALDWYTH. I can, my lord, for mine own sake, for thine,

For England, for thy poor white dove, who flutters
Between thee and the porch, but then would find
Her nest within the cloister, and be still.

HAROLD. Canst thou love one, who cannot love again?

ALDWYTH. Full hope have I that love will answer love.

HAROLD. Then in the name of the great God, so be it!

Come, Aldred, join our hands before the hosts,
That all may see.

[ALDRED *joins the hands of* HAROLD *and* ALDWYTH *and blesses them.*

VOICES. Harold, Harold and Aldwyth!

HAROLD. Set forth our golden Dragon, let him flap
The wings that beat down Wales!
Advance our Standard of the Warrior,
Dark among gems and gold; and thou, brave banner,
Blaze like a night of fatal stars on those
Who read their doom and die.
Where lie the Norsemen? on the Derwent? ay
At Stamford-bridge.
Morcar, collect thy men; Edwin, my friend—
Thou lingerest.—Gurth,—
Last night King Edward came to me in dreams—

The rosy face and long down-silvering beard—
He told me I should conquer:—
I am no woman to put faith in dreams.
(*To his army.*)
Last night King Edward came to me in dreams,
And told me we should conquer.

VOICES. Forward! Forward!
Harold and Holy Cross!

ALDWYTH. The day is won!

SCENE II.—A PLAIN. BEFORE THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE.

HAROLD *and his* GUARD.

HAROLD. Who is it comes this way? Tostig?
(*Enter* TOSTIG *with a small force.*) O brother,
What art thou doing here?

TOSTIG. I am foraging
For Norway's army.

HAROLD. I could take and slay thee.
Thou art in arms against us.

TOSTIG. Take and slay me,
For Edward loved me.

HAROLD. Edward bad me spare thee.

TOSTIG. I hate King Edward, for he join'd with thee

To drive me outlaw'd. Take and slay me, I say,
Or I shall count thee fool.

HAROLD. Take thee, or free thee,
Free thee or slay thee, Norway will have war;
No man would strike with Tostig, save for Norway.
Thou art nothing in thine England, save for Norway,
Who loves not thee but war. What dost thou here,
Trampling thy mother's bosom into blood?

TOSTIG. She hath wean'd me from it with such bitterness.
I come for mine own Earldom, my Northumbria;
Thou hast given it to the enemy of our house.

HAROLD. Northumbria threw thee off, she will not have thee,
Thou hast misused her: and, O crowning crime!
Hast murder'd thine own guest, the son of Orm,
Gamel, at thine own hearth.

TOSTIG. The slow, fat fool!
He drawl'd and prated so, I smote him suddenly,
I knew not what I did. He held with Morcar.—
I hate myself for all things that I do.

HAROLD. And Morcar holds with us. Come back with him.
Know what thou dost; and we may find for thee,
So thou be chasten'd by thy banishment,
Some easier earldom.

TOSTIG. What for Norway then?
He looks for land among us, he and his.

HAROLD. Seven feet of English land, or something more,
Seeing he is a giant.

TOSTIG. That is noble!
That sounds of Godwin.

HAROLD. Come thou back, and be
Once more a son of Godwin.

TOSTIG (*turns away*). O brother, brother,
O Harold—

HAROLD (*laying his hand on* TOSTIG'S *shoulder*). Nay then, come thou back to us!

TOSTIG (*after a pause turning to him*). Never shall any man say that I, that Tostig
Conjured the mightier Harold from his North
To do the battle for me here in England,
Then left him for the meaner! thee!—
Thou hast no passion for the House of Godwin—
Thou hast but cared to make thyself a king—
Thou hast sold me for a cry.—
Thou gavest thy voice against me in the Council—
I hate thee, and despise thee, and defy thee.
Farewell for ever! [*Exit.*

HAROLD. On to Stamford-bridge!

SCENE III.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF STAMFORD-BRIDGE.
BANQUET.

HAROLD *and* ALDWYTH. GURTH, LEOFWIN, MORCAR, EDWIN, *and other* EARLS *and* THANES.

VOICES. Hail! Harold! Aldwyth! hail, bridegroom and bride!

ALDWYTH (*talking with* HAROLD). Answer them thou!

Is this our marriage-banquet? Would the wines
Of wedding had been dash'd into the cups
Of victory, and our marriage and thy glory
Been drunk together! these poor hands but sew,
Spin, broider—would that they were man's to have held
The battle-axe by thee!

HAROLD. There *was* a moment
When being forced aloof from all my guard,
And striking at Hardrada and his madmen
I had wish'd for any weapon.

ALDWYTH. Why art thou sad?

HAROLD. I have lost the boy who play'd at ball with me,
With whom I fought another fight than this
Of Stamford-bridge.

ALDWYTH. Ay! ay! thy victories
Over our own poor Wales, when at thy side
He conquer'd with thee.

HAROLD. No—the childish fist
That cannot strike again.

ALDWYTH. Thou art too kindly.
Why didst thou let so many Norsemen hence?
Thy fierce forekings had clench'd their pirate hides
To the bleak church doors, like kites upon a barn.

HAROLD. Is there so great a need to tell thee why?

ALDWYTH. Yea, am I not thy wife?

VOICES. Hail, Harold, Aldwyth!
Bridegroom and bride!

ALDWYTH. Answer them! [*To* HAROLD.

HAROLD (*to all*). Earls and Thanes!
Full thanks for your fair greeting of my bride!
Earls, Thanes, and all our countrymen! the day,
Our day beside the Derwent will not shine
Less than a star among the goldenest hours
Of Alfred, or of Edward his great son,
Or Athelstan, or English Ironside
Who fought with Knut, or Knut who coming Dane
Died English. Every man about his king
Fought like a king; the king like his own man,
No better; one for all, and all for one,
One soul! and therefore have we shatter'd back

The hugest wave from Norseland ever yet
Surged on us, and our battle-axes broken
The Raven's wing, and dumb'd his carrion croak
From the gray sea for ever. Many are gone—
Drink to the dead who died for us, the living
Who fought and would have died, but happier lived,
If happier be to live; they both have life
In the large mouth of England, till *her* voice
Die with the world. Hail—hail!

MORCAR. May all invaders perish like Hardrada!
All traitors fail like Tostig! [*All drink but* HAROLD.

ALDWYTH. Thy cup's full!

HAROLD. I saw the hand of Tostig cover it.
Our dear, dead, traitor-brother, Tostig, him
Reverently we buried. Friends, had I been here,
Without too large self-lauding I must hold
The sequel had been other than his league
With Norway, and this battle. Peace be with him!
He was not of the worst. If there be those
At banquet in this hall, and hearing me—
For there be those I fear who prick'd the lion
To make him spring, that sight of Danish blood
Might serve an end not English—peace with them
Likewise, if *they* can be at peace with what
God gave us to divide us from the wolf!

ALDWYTH (*aside to* HAROLD). Make not our Morcar sullen: it is not wise.

HAROLD. Hail to the living who fought, the dead who fell!

VOICES. Hail, hail!

FIRST THANE. How ran that answer which King Harold gave
To his dead namesake, when he ask'd for England?

LEOFWIN. 'Seven feet of English earth, or something more,
Seeing he is a giant!'

FIRST THANE. Then for the bastard
Six feet and nothing more!

LEOFWIN. Ay, but belike
Thou hast not learnt his measure.

FIRST THANE. By St. Edmund
I over-measure him. Sound sleep to the man
Here by dead Norway without dream or dawn!

SECOND THANE. What is he bragging still that he will come
To thrust our Harold's throne from under him?
My nurse would tell me of a molehill crying
To a mountain 'Stand aside and room for me!'

FIRST THANE. Let him come! let him come. Here's to him, sink or swim! [*Drinks.*

SECOND THANE. God sink him!

FIRST THANE. Cannot hands which had the strength
To shove that stranded iceberg off our shores,

And send the shatter'd North again to sea,
Scuttle his cockle-shell? What's Brunanburg
To Stamford-bridge? a war-crash, and so hard,
So loud, that, by St. Dunstan, old St. Thor—
By God, we thought him dead—but our old Thor
Heard his own thunder again, and woke and came
Among us again, and mark'd the sons of those
Who made this Britain England, break the North:

Mark'd how the war-axe swang,
Heard how the war-horn sang,
Mark'd how the spear-head sprang,
Heard how the shield-wall rang,
Iron on iron clang,
Anvil on hammer bang—

SECOND THANE. Hammer on anvil, hammer on anvil. Old dog,
Thou art drunk, old dog!

FIRST THANE. Too drunk to fight with thee!

SECOND THANE. Fight thou with thine own double, not with me,
Keep that for Norman William!

FIRST THANE. Down with William!

THIRD THANE. The washerwoman's brat!

FOURTH THANE. The tanner's bastard!

FIFTH THANE. The Falaise byblow!

Enter a THANE *from Pevensey, spatter'd with mud.*

HAROLD. Ay, but what late guest,
As haggard as a fast of forty days,
And caked and plaster'd with a hundred mires,
Hath stumbled on our cups?

THANE *from Pevensey.* My lord the King!
William the Norman, for the wind had changed—

HAROLD. I felt it in the middle of that fierce fight
At Stamford-bridge. William hath landed, ha?

THANE *from Pevensey.* Landed at Pevensey—I am from Pevensey—
Hath wasted all the land at Pevensey—
Hath harried mine own cattle—God confound him!
I have ridden night and day from Pevensey—
A thousand ships—a hundred thousand men—
Thousands of horses, like as many lions
Neighing and roaring as they leapt to land—

HAROLD. How oft in coming hast thou broken bread?

THANE *from Pevensey.* Some thrice, or so.

HAROLD. Bring not thy hollowness
On our full feast. Famine is fear, were it but
Of being starved. Sit down, sit down, and eat,
And, when again red-blooded, speak again;
(*Aside.*) The men that guarded England to the South

Were scatter'd to the harvest. . . . No power mine
To hold their force together. . . . Many are fallen
At Stamford-bridge . . . the people stupid-sure
Sleep like their swine . . . in South and North at once
I could not be.
(*Aloud.*) Gurth, Leofwin, Morcar, Edwin!
(*Pointing to the revellers.*) The curse of England!
these are drown'd in wassail,
And cannot see the world but thro' their wines!
Leave them! and thee too, Aldwyth, must I leave—
Harsh is the news! hard is our honeymoon!
Thy pardon. (*Turning round to his* ATTENDANTS.)
Break the banquet up . . . Ye four!
And thou, my carrier-pigeon of black news,
Cram thy crop full, but come when thou art call'd.
[*Exit* HAROLD.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A TENT ON A MOUND, FROM WHICH CAN BE SEEN THE FIELD OF SENLAC.

HAROLD, *sitting; by him standing* HUGH MARGOT *the* Monk, GURTH, LEOFWIN.

HAROLD. Refer my cause, my crown to Rome!
. . . The wolf
Muddéd the brook and predetermined all.
Monk,
Thou hast said thy say, and had my constant 'No'
For all but instant battle. I hear no more.

MARGOT. Hear me again—for the last time. Arise,
Scatter thy people home, descend the hill,
Lay hands of full allegiance in thy Lord's
And crave his mercy, for the Holy Father
Hath given this realm of England to the Norman.

HAROLD. Then for the last time, monk, I ask again
When had the Lateran and the Holy Father
To do with England's choice of her own king?

MARGOT. Earl, the first Christian Cæsar drew to the East
To leave the Pope dominion in the West.
He gave him all the kingdoms of the West.

HAROLD. So!—did he?—Earl—I have a mind to play
The William with thine eyesight and thy tongue.
Earl—ay—thou art but a messenger of William.
I am weary—go: make me not wroth with thee!

MARGOT. Mock-king, I am the messenger of God,
His Norman Daniel! Mene, Mene, Tekel!
Is thy wrath Hell, that I should spare to cry,
Yon heaven is wroth with *thee?* Hear me again!
Our Saints have moved the Church that moves the world,
And all the Heavens and very God: they heard—
They know King Edward's promise and thine—thine.

HAROLD. Should they not know free England crowns herself?
Not know that he nor I had power to promise?
Not know that Edward cancell'd his own promise?
And for *my* part therein—Back to that juggler,
[*Rising.*
Tell him the Saints are nobler than he dreams,
Tell him that God is nobler than the Saints,
And tell him we stand arm'd on Senlac Hill,
And bide the doom of God.

MARGOT. Hear it thro' me.
The realm for which thou art forsworn is cursed,
The babe enwomb'd and at the breast is cursed,
The corpse thou whelmest with thine earth is cursed,
The soul who fighteth on thy side is cursed,
The seed thou sowest in thy field is cursed,
The steer wherewith thou plowest thy field is cursed,
The fowl that fleeth o'er thy field is cursed,
And thou, usurper, liar—

HAROLD. Out, beast monk!

[*Lifting his hand to strike him.* GURTH *stops the blow.*
I ever hated monks.

MARGOT. I am but a voice
Among you: murder, martyr me if ye will—

HAROLD. Thanks, Gurth! The simple, silent, selfless man
Is worth a world of tonguesters. (*To* MARGOT.) Get thee gone!
He means the thing he says. See him out safe!

LEOFWIN. He hath blown himself as red as fire with curses.
An honest fool! Follow me, honest fool,
But if thou blurt thy curse among our folk,
I know not—I may give that egg-bald head
The tap that silences.

HAROLD. See him out safe.

[*Exeunt* LEOFWIN *and* MARGOT.

GURTH. Thou hast lost thine even temper, brother Harold!

HAROLD. Gurth, when I past by Waltham, my foundation
For men who serve the neighbour, not themselves,
I cast me down prone, praying; and, when I rose,
They told me that the Holy Rood had lean'd
And bow'd above me; whether that which held it
Had weaken'd, and the Rood itself were bound
To that necessity which binds us down;
Whether it bow'd at all but in their fancy;
Or if it bow'd, whether it symbol'd ruin
Or glory, who shall tell? but they were sad,
And somewhat sadden'd me.

GURTH. Yet if a fear,
Or shadow of a fear, lest the strange Saints
By whom thou swarest, should have power to balk
Thy puissance in this fight with him, who made
And heard thee swear—brother—*I* have not sworn—
If the king fall, may not the kingdom fall?
But if I fall, I fall, and thou art king;
And, if I win, I win, and thou art king;
Draw thou to London, there make strength to breast
Whatever chance, but leave this day to me.

LEOFWIN (*entering*). And waste the land about thee as thou goest,

And be thy hand as winter on the field,
To leave the foe no forage.

HAROLD. Noble Gurth!
Best son of Godwin! If I fall, I fall—
The doom of God! How should the people fight
When the king flies? And, Leofwin, art thou mad?
How should the King of England waste the fields
Of England, his own people?—No glance yet
Of the Northumbrian helmet on the heath?

LEOFWIN. No, but a shoal of wives upon the heath,
And someone saw thy willy-nilly nun
Vying a tress against our golden fern.

HAROLD. Vying a tear with our cold dews, a sigh
With these low-moaning heavens. Let her be fetch'd.
We have parted from our wife without reproach,
Tho' we have pierced thro' all her practices;
And that is well.

LEOFWIN. I saw her even now:
She hath not left us.

HAROLD. Nought of Morcar then?

GURTH. Nor seen, nor heard; thine, William's or his own
As wind blows, or tide flows: belike he watches,
If this war-storm in one of its rough rolls
Wash up that old crown of Northumberland.

HAROLD. I married her for Morcar—a sin against

The truth of love. Evil for good, it seems,
Is oft as childless of the good as evil
For evil.

LEOFWIN. Good for good hath borne at times
A bastard false as William.

HAROLD. Ay, if Wisdom
Pair'd not with Good. But I am somewhat worn,
A snatch of sleep were like the peace of God.
Gurth, Leofwin, go once more about the hill—
What did the dead man call it—Sanguelac,
The lake of blood?

LEOFWIN. A lake that dips in William
As well as Harold.

HAROLD. Like enough. I have seen
The trenches dug, the palisades uprear'd
And wattled thick with ash and willow-wands;
Yea, wrought at them myself. Go round once more;
See all be sound and whole. No Norman horse
Can shatter England, standing shield by shield;
Tell that again to all.

GURTH. I will, good brother.

HAROLD. Our guardsman hath but toil'd his hand and foot,
I hand, foot, heart and head. Some wine! (*One pours wine into a goblet which he hands to* HAROLD.)
Too much!

What? we must use our battle-axe to-day.
Our guardsmen have slept well, since we came in?

LEOFWIN. Ay, slept and snored. Your second-sighted man
That scared the dying conscience of the king,
Misheard their snores for groans. They are up again
And chanting that old song of Brunanburg
Where England conquer'd.

HAROLD. That is well. The Norman,
What is he doing?

LEOFWIN. Praying for Normandy;
Our scouts have heard the tinkle of their bells.

HAROLD. And our old songs are prayers for England too!
But by all Saints—

LEOFWIN. Barring the Norman!

HAROLD. Nay,
Were the great trumpet blowing doomsday dawn,
I needs must rest. Call when the Norman moves—
[*Exeunt all, but* HAROLD.
No horse—thousands of horses—our shield wall—
Wall—break it not—break not—break— [*Sleeps.*

VISION OF EDWARD. Son Harold, I thy king, who came before
To tell thee thou shouldst win at Stamford-bridge,
Come yet once more, from where I am at peace,
Because I loved thee in my mortal day,

To tell thee thou shalt die on Senlac hill—
Sanguelac!

VISION OF WULFNOTH. O brother, from my ghastly oubliette
I send my voice across the narrow seas—
No more, no more, dear brother, nevermore—
Sanguelac!

VISION OF TOSTIG. O brother, most unbrotherlike to me,
Thou gavest thy voice against me in my life,
I give my voice against thee from the grave—
Sanguelac!

VISION OF NORMAN SAINTS. O hapless Harold! King but for an hour!
Thou swarest falsely by our blessed bones,
We give our voice against thee out of heaven!
Sanguelac! Sanguelac! The arrow! the arrow!

HAROLD (*starting up, battle-axe in hand*). Away!
My battle-axe against your voices. Peace!
The king's last word—'the arrow!' I shall die—
I die for England then, who lived for England—
What nobler? men must die.
I cannot fall into a falser world—
I have done no man wrong. Tostig, poor brother,
Art *thou* so anger'd?
Fain had I kept thine earldom in thy hands
Save for thy wild and violent will that wrench'd

All hearts of freemen from thee. I could do
No other than this way advise the king
Against the race of Godwin. Is it possible
That mortal men should bear their earthly heats
Into yon bloodless world, and threaten us thence
Unschool'd of Death? Thus then thou art revenged—
I left our England naked to the South
To meet thee in the North. The Norseman's raid
Hath helpt the Norman, and the race of Godwin
Hath ruin'd Godwin. No—our waking thoughts
Suffer a stormless shipwreck in the pools
Of sullen slumber, and arise again
Disjointed: only dreams—where mine own self
Takes part against myself! Why? for a spark
Of self-disdain born in me when I sware
Falsely to him, the falser Norman, over
His gilded ark of mummy-saints, by whom
I knew not that I sware,—not for myself—
For England—yet not wholly—

Enter EDITH.

Edith, Edith,
Get thou into thy cloister as the king
Will'd it: be safe: the perjury-mongering Count
Hath made too good an use of Holy Church
To break her close! There the great God of truth
Fill all thine hours with peace!—A lying devil

Hath haunted me—mine oath—my wife—I fain
Had made my marriage not a lie; I could not:
Thou art my bride! and thou in after years
Praying perchance for this poor soul of mine
In cold, white cells beneath an icy moon—
This memory to thee!—and this to England,
My legacy of war against the Pope
From child to child, from Pope to Pope, from age to age,
Till the sea wash her level with her shores,
Or till the Pope be Christ's.

Enter ALDWYTH.

ALDWYTH (*to* EDITH). Away from him!

EDITH. I will . . . I have not spoken to the king
One word; and one I must. Farewell! [*Going.*

HAROLD. Not yet.
Stay.

EDITH. To what use?

HAROLD. The king commands thee, woman!
(*To* ALDWYTH.)
Have thy two brethren sent their forces in?

ALDWYTH. Nay, I fear not.

HAROLD. Then there's no force in thee!
Thou didst possess thyself of Edward's ear
To part me from the woman that I loved!

Thou didst arouse the fierce Northumbrians!
Thou hast been false to England and to me!—
As . . . in some sort . . . I have been false to thee.
Leave me. No more—Pardon on both sides—Go!

ALDWYTH. Alas, my lord, I loved thee.

HAROLD (*bitterly*). With a love
Passing thy love for Griffyth! wherefore now
Obey my first and last commandment. Go!

ALDWYTH. O Harold! husband! Shall we meet again?

HAROLD. After the battle—after the battle. Go.

ALDWYTH. I go. (*Aside.*) That I could stab her standing there! [*Exit* ALDWYTH.

EDITH. Alas, my lord, she loved thee.

HAROLD. Never! never!

EDITH. I saw it in her eyes!

HAROLD. I see it in thine.
And not on thee—nor England—fall God's doom!

EDITH. On *thee?* on me. And thou art England! Alfred
Was England. Ethelred was nothing. England
Is but her king, and thou art Harold!

HAROLD. Edith,
The sign in heaven—the sudden blast at sea—
My fatal oath—the dead Saints—the dark dreams—
The Pope's Anathema—the Holy Rood

That bow'd to me at Waltham—Edith, if
I, the last English King of England—
EDITH. No,
First of a line that coming from the people,
And chosen by the people—
HAROLD. And fighting for
And dying for the people—
EDITH. Living! living!
HAROLD. Yea so, good cheer! thou art Harold, I am Edith!
Look not thus wan!
EDITH. What matters how I look?
Have we not broken Wales and Norseland? slain,
Whose life was all one battle, incarnate war,
Their giant-king, a mightier man-in-arms
Than William.
HAROLD. Ay, my girl, no tricks in him—
No bastard he! when all was lost, he yell'd,
And bit his shield, and dash'd it on the ground,
And swaying his two-handed sword about him,
Two deaths at every swing, ran in upon us
And died so, and I loved him as I hate
This liar who made me liar. If Hate can kill,
And Loathing wield a Saxon battle-axe—
EDITH. Waste not thy might before the battle!
HAROLD. No,
And thou must hence. Stigand will see thee safe,

And so—Farewell. [*He is going, but turns back.*
The ring thou darest not wear,
I have had it fashion'd, see, to meet my hand.
[HAROLD *shows the ring which is on his finger.*
Farewell! [*He is going, but turns back again.*
I am dead as Death this day to ought of earth's
Save William's death or mine.

EDITH. Thy death!—to-day!
Is it not thy birthday?

HAROLD. Ay, that happy day!
A birthday welcome! happy days and many!
One—this! [*They embrace.*
Look, I will bear thy blessing into the battle
And front the doom of God.

NORMAN CRIES (*heard in the distance*). Ha Rou!
Ha Rou!

Enter GURTH.

GURTH. The Norman moves!

HAROLD. Harold and Holy Cross!
[*Exeunt* HAROLD *and* GURTH.

Enter STIGAND.

STIGAND. Our Church in arms—the lamb the lion—not
Spear into pruning-hook—the counter way—

Cowl, helm; and crozier, battle-axe. Abbot Alfwig,
Leofric, and all the monks of Peterboro'
Strike for the king; but I, old wretch, old Stigand,
With hands too limp to brandish iron—and yet
I have a power—would Harold ask me for it—
I have a power.

EDITH. What power, holy father?

STIGAND. Power now from Harold to command thee hence
And see thee safe from Senlac.

EDITH. I remain!

STIGAND. Yea, so will I, daughter, until I find
Which way the battle balance. I can see it
From where we stand: and, live or die, I would
I were among them!

CANONS *from Waltham* (*singing without*).

Salva patriam
Sancte Pater,
Salva Fili,
Salva Spiritus,
Salva patriam,
Sancta Mater.[1]

EDITH. Are those the blessed angels quiring, father?

[1] The *a* throughout these Latin hymns should be sounded broad, as in 'father.'

STIGAND. No, daughter, but the canons out of Waltham,
The king's foundation, that have follow'd him.
EDITH. O God of battles, make their wall of shields
Firm as thy cliffs, strengthen their palisades!
What is that whirring sound?
STIGAND. The Norman arrow!
EDITH. Look out upon the battle—is he safe?
STIGAND. The king of England stands between his banners.
He glitters on the crowning of the hill.
God save King Harold!
EDITH. —chosen by his people
And fighting for his people!
STIGAND. There is one
Come as Goliath came of yore—he flings
His brand in air and catches it again,
He is chanting some old warsong.
EDITH. And no David
To meet him?
STIGAND. Ay, there springs a Saxon on him,
Falls—and another falls.
EDITH. Have mercy on us!
STIGAND. Lo! our good Gurth hath smitten him to the death.
EDITH. So perish all the enemies of Harold!

CANONS (*singing*).

Hostis in Angliam
Ruit prædator,
Illorum, Domine,
Scutum scindatur!
Hostis per Angliae
Plagas bacchatur;
Casa crematur,
Pastor fugatur
Grex trucidatur—

STIGAND. Illos trucida, Domine.
EDITH. Ay, good father.
CANONS (*singing*).

Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!

ENGLISH CRIES. Harold and Holy Cross! Out! out!
STIGAND. Our javelins
Answer their arrows. All the Norman foot
Are storming up the hill. The range of knights
Sit, each a statue on his horse, and wait.
ENGLISH CRIES. Harold and God Almighty!
NORMAN CRIES. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

CANONS (*singing*).

Eques cum pedite
Præpediatur!
Illorum in lacrymas
Cruor fundatur!
Pereant, pereant,
Anglia precatur.

STIGAND. Look, daughter, look.

EDITH. Nay, father, look for *me!*

STIGAND. Our axes lighten with a single flash
About the summit of the hill, and heads
And arms are sliver'd off and splinter'd by
Their lightning—and they fly—the Norman flies.

EDITH. Stigand, O father, have we won the day?

STIGAND. No, daughter, no—they fall behind the horse—
Their horse are thronging to the barricades;
I see the gonfanon of Holy Peter
Floating above their helmets—ha! he is down!

EDITH. He down! Who down?

STIGAND. The Norman Count is down.

EDITH. So perish all the enemies of England!

STIGAND. No, no, he hath risen again—he bares his face—

Shouts something—he points onward—all their horse
Swallow the hill locust-like, swarming up.

EDITH. O God of battles, make his battle-axe keen
As thine own sharp-dividing justice, heavy
As thine own bolts that fall on crimeful heads
Charged with the weight of heaven wherefrom they fall!

CANONS (*singing*).

Jacta tonitrua
Deus bellator!
Surgas e tenebris,
Sis vindicator!
Fulmina, fulmina
Deus vastator!

EDITH. O God of battles, they are three to one,
Make thou one man as three to roll them down!

CANONS (*singing*).

Equus cum equite
Dejiciatur!
Acies, Acies
Prona sternatur!
Illorum lanceas
Frange Creator!

STIGAND. Yea, yea, for how their lances snap and shiver

Against the shifting blaze of Harold's axe!
War-woodman of old Woden, how he fells
The mortal copse of faces! There! And there!
The horse and horseman cannot meet the shield,
The blow that brains the horseman cleaves the horse,
The horse and horseman roll along the hill,
They fly once more, they fly, the Norman flies!

Equus cum equite
Præcipitatur.

EDITH. O God, the God of truth hath heard my cry.
Follow them, follow them, drive them to the sea!

Illorum scelera
Pœna sequatur!

STIGAND. Truth! no; a lie; a trick, a Norman trick!
They turn on the pursuer, horse against foot;
They murder all that follow.
EDITH. Have mercy on us!
STIGAND. Hot-headed fools—to burst the wall of shields!
They have broken the commandment of the king:
EDITH. *His* oath was broken—O holy Norman Saints,

Ye that are now of heaven, and see beyond
Your Norman shrines, pardon it, pardon it,
That he forsware himself for all he loved,
Me, me and all! Look out upon the battle!

STIGAND. They thunder again upon the barricades.
My sight is eagle, but the strife so thick—
This is the hottest of it: hold, ash! hold, willow!

ENGLISH CRIES. Out, out!

NORMAN CRIES. Ha Rou!

STIGAND. Ha! Gurth hath leapt upon him
And slain him: he hath fallen.

EDITH. And I am heard.
Glory to God in the Highest! fallen, fallen!

STIGAND. No, no, his horse—he mounts another
—wields
His war-club, dashes it on Gurth, and Gurth,
Our noble Gurth, is down!

EDITH. Have mercy on us!

STIGAND. And Leofwin is down!

EDITH. Have mercy on us!
O Thou that knowest, let not my strong prayer
Be weaken'd in thy sight, because I love
The husband of another!

NORMAN CRIES. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

EDITH. I do not hear our English war-cry.

STIGAND. No.

EDITH. Look out upon the battle—is he safe?

STIGAND. He stands between the banners with the dead
So piled about him he can hardly move.

EDITH (*takes up the war-cry*). Out! out!

NORMAN CRIES. Ha Rou!

EDITH (*cries out*). Harold and Holy Cross!

NORMAN CRIES. Ha Rou! Ha Rou!

EDITH. What is that whirring sound?

STIGAND. The Norman sends his arrows up to Heaven,
They fall on those within the palisade!

EDITH. Look out upon the hill—is Harold there?

STIGAND. Sanguelac—Sanguelac—the arrow—the arrow!—away!

SCENE II.—FIELD OF THE DEAD. NIGHT.

ALDWYTH *and* EDITH.

ALDWYTH. O Edith, art thou here? O Harold, Harold—
Our Harold—we shall never see him more.

EDITH. For there was more than sister in my kiss,
And so the saints were wroth. I cannot love them,
For they are Norman saints—and yet I should—
They are so much holier than their harlot's son
With whom they play'd their game against the king!

ALDWYTH. The king is slain, the kingdom overthrown!

EDITH. No matter!

ALDWYTH. How no matter, Harold slain?—
I cannot find his body. O help me thou!
O Edith, if I ever wrought against thee,
Forgive me thou, and help me here!

EDITH. No matter!

ALDWYTH. Not help me, nor forgive me?

EDITH. So thou saidest.

ALDWYTH. I say it now, forgive me!

EDITH. Cross me not!
I am seeking one who wedded me in secret.
Whisper! God's angels only know it. Ha!
What art *thou* doing here among the dead?
They are stripping the dead bodies naked yonder,
And thou art come to rob them of their rings!

ALDWYTH. O Edith, Edith, I have lost both crown
And husband.

EDITH. So have I.

ALDWYTH. I tell thee, girl,
I am seeking my dead Harold.

EDITH. And I mine!
The Holy Father strangled him with a hair
Of Peter, and his brother Tostig helpt;
The wicked sister clapt her hands and laugh'd;
Then all the dead fell on him.

ALDWYTH. Edith, Edith—

EDITH. What was he like, this husband? like to thee?

Call not for help from me. I knew him not.
He lies not here: not close beside the standard.
Here fell the truest, manliest hearts of England.
Go further hence and find him.

ALDWYTH. She is crazed!

EDITH. That doth not matter either. Lower the light.

He must be here.

Enter two CANONS, OSGOD *and* ATHELRIC, *with torches. They turn over the dead bodies and examine them as they pass.*

OSGOD. I think that this is Thurkill.

ATHELRIC. More likely Godric.

OSGOD. I am sure this body
Is Alfwig, the king's uncle.

ATHELRIC. So it is!
No, no — brave Gurth, one gash from brow to knee!

OSGOD. And here is Leofwin.

EDITH. And here is *He!*

ALDWYTH. Harold? Oh no—nay, if it were—my God,

They have so maim'd and murder'd all his face
There is no man can swear to him.

EDITH. But one woman!

Look you, we never mean to part again.
I have found him, I am happy.
Was there not someone ask'd me for forgiveness?
I yield it freely, being the true wife
Of this dead King, who never bore revenge.

Enter COUNT WILLIAM *and* WILLIAM MALET.

WILLIAM. Who be these women? And what body is this?

EDITH. Harold, thy better!

WILLIAM. Ay, and what art thou?

EDITH. His wife!

MALET. Not true, my girl, here is the Queen! [*Pointing out* ALDWYTH.

WILLIAM (*to* ALDWYTH). Wast thou his Queen?

ALDWYTH. I was the Queen of Wales.

WILLIAM. Why then of England. Madam, fear us not.
(*To* MALET.) Knowest thou this other?

MALET. When I visited England,
Some held she was his wife in secret—some—
Well—some believed she was his paramour.

EDITH. Norman, thou liest! liars all of you,

Your Saints and all! *I* am his wife! and she—
For look, our marriage ring!
[*She draws it off the finger of* HAROLD.
I lost it somehow—
I lost it, playing with it when I was wild.
That bred the doubt! but I am wiser now . . .
I am too wise . . . Will none among you all
Bear me true witness—only for this once—
That I have found it here again? [*She puts it on.*
And thou,
Thy wife am I for ever and evermore.
[*Falls on the body and dies.*

WILLIAM. Death!—and enough of death for this one day,
The day of St. Calixtus, and the day,
My day when I was born.

MALET. And this dead king's
Who, king or not, hath kinglike fought and fallen,
His birthday, too. It seems but yestereven
I held it with him in his English halls,
His day, with all his rooftree ringing 'Harold,'
Before he fell into the snare of Guy;
When all men counted Harold would be king,
And Harold was most happy.

WILLIAM. Thou art half English.
Take them away!
Malet, I vow to build a church to God

Here on the hill of battle; let our high altar
Stand where their standard fell . . . where these two lie.
Take them away, I do not love to see them.
Pluck the dead woman off the dead man, Malet!

MALET. Faster than ivy. Must I hack her arms off?
How shall I part them?

WILLIAM. Leave them. Let them be!
Bury him and his paramour together.
He that was false in oath to me, it seems
Was false to his own wife. We will not give him
A Christian burial: yet he was a warrior,
And wise, yea truthful, till that blighted vow
Which God avenged to-day.
Wrap them together in a purple cloak
And lay them both upon the waste sea-shore
At Hastings, there to guard the land for which
He did forswear himself—a warrior—ay,
And but that Holy Peter fought for us,
And that the false Northumbrian held aloof,
And save for that chance arrow which the Saints
Sharpen'd and sent against him—who can tell?—
Three horses had I slain beneath me: twice
I thought that all was lost. Since I knew battle,
And that was from my boyhood, never yet—
No, by the splendour of God—have I fought men

Like Harold and his brethren, and his guard
Of English. Every man about his king
Fell where he stood. They loved him : and, pray God
My Normans may but move as true with me
To the door of death. Of one self-stock at first,
Make them again one people—Norman, English ;
And English, Norman ; we should have a hand
To grasp the world with, and a foot to stamp it . . .
Flat. Praise the saints. It is over. No more blood !
I am king of England, so they thwart me not,
And I will rule according to their laws.
(*To* ALDWYTH.) Madam, we will entreat thee with all honour.

ALDWYTH. My punishment is more than I can bear.

THE

LOVER'S TALE.

THE original Preface to 'The Lover's Tale' states that it was composed in my nineteenth year. Two only of the three parts then written were printed, when, feeling the imperfection of the poem, I withdrew it from the press. One of my friends however who, boylike, admired the boy's work, distributed among our common associates of that hour some copies of these two parts, without my knowledge, without the omissions and amendments which I had in contemplation, and marred by the many misprints of the compositor. Seeing that these two parts have of late been mercilessly pirated, and that what I had deemed scarce worthy to live is not allowed to die, may I not be pardoned if I suffer the whole poem at last to come into the light —accompanied with a reprint of the sequel—a work of my mature life—'The Golden Supper'?

May 1879.

ARGUMENT.

JULIAN, whose cousin and foster-sister, Camilla, has been wedded to his friend and rival, Lionel, endeavours to narrate the story of his own love for her, and the strange sequel. He speaks (in Parts II. and III.) of having been haunted by visions and the sound of bells, tolling for a funeral, and at last ringing for a marriage; but he breaks away, overcome, as he approaches the Event, and a witness to it completes the tale.

I.

HERE far away, seen from the topmost cliff,
Filling with purple gloom the vacancies
Between the tufted hills, the sloping seas
Hung in mid-heaven, and half-way down rare sails,
White as white clouds, floated from sky to sky.
Oh! pleasant breast of waters, quiet bay,
Like to a quiet mind in the loud world,
Where the chafed breakers of the outer sea

Sank powerless, as anger falls aside
And withers on the breast of peaceful love;
Thou didst receive the growth of pines that fledged
The hills that watch'd thee, as Love watcheth Love,
In thine own essence, and delight thyself
To make it wholly thine on sunny days.
Keep thou thy name of 'Lover's Bay.' See, sirs,
Even now the Goddess of the Past, that takes
The heart, and sometimes touches but one string
That quivers, and is silent, and sometimes
Sweeps suddenly all its half-moulder'd chords
To some old melody, begins to play
That air which pleased her first. I feel thy breath;
I come, great Mistress of the ear and eye:
Thy breath is of the pinewood; and tho' years
Have hollow'd out a deep and stormy strait
Betwixt the native land of Love and me,
Breathe but a little on me, and the sail
Will draw me to the rising of the sun,
The lucid chambers of the morning star,
And East of Life.

Permit me, friend, I prythee,
To pass my hand across my brows, and muse
On those dear hills, that never more will meet
The sight that throbs and aches beneath my touch,
As tho' there beat a heart in either eye;
For when the outer lights are darken'd thus,
The memory's vision hath a keener edge.
It grows upon me now—the semicircle
Of dark-blue waters and the narrow fringe
Of curving beach—its wreaths of dripping green—
Its pale pink shells—the summerhouse aloft
That open'd on the pines with doors of glass,
A mountain nest—the pleasure-boat that rock'd,
Light-green with its own shadow, keel to keel,
Upon the dappled dimplings of the wave,
That blanch'd upon its side.

O Love, O Hope!
They come, they crowd upon me all at once—
Moved from the cloud of unforgotten things,
That sometimes on the horizon of the mind

Lies folded, often sweeps athwart in storm—
Flash upon flash they lighten thro' me—days
Of dewy dawning and the amber eves
When thou and I, Camilla, thou and I
Were borne about the bay or safely moor'd
Beneath a low-brow'd cavern, where the tide
Plash'd, sapping its worn ribs; and all without
The slowly-ridging rollers on the cliffs
Clash'd, calling to each other, and thro' the arch
Down those loud waters, like a setting star,
Mixt with the gorgeous west the lighthouse shone,
And silver-smiling Venus ere she fell
Would often loiter in her balmy blue,
To crown it with herself.

Here, too, my love
Waver'd at anchor with me, when day hung
From his mid-dome in Heaven's airy halls;
Gleams of the water-circles as they broke,
Flicker'd like doubtful smiles about her lips,
Quiver'd a flying glory on her hair,

Leapt like a passing thought across her eyes;
And mine with one that will not pass, till earth
And heaven pass too, dwelt on my heaven, a face
Most starry-fair, but kindled from within
As 'twere with dawn. She was dark-hair'd, dark-eyed:
Oh, such dark eyes! a single glance of them
Will govern a whole life from birth to death,
Careless of all things else, led on with light
In trances and in visions: look at them,
You lose yourself in utter ignorance;
You cannot find their depth; for they go back,
And farther back, and still withdraw themselves
Quite into the deep soul, that evermore
Fresh springing from her fountains in the brain,
Still pouring thro', floods with redundant life
Her narrow portals.

Trust me, long ago
I should have died, if it were possible
To die in gazing on that perfectness
Which I do bear within me: I had died,

But from my farthest lapse, my latest ebb,
Thine image, like a charm of light and strength
Upon the waters, push'd me back again
On these deserted sands of barren life.
Tho' from the deep vault where the heart of Hope
Fell into dust, and crumbled in the dark—
Forgetting how to render beautiful
Her countenance with quick and healthful blood—
Thou didst not sway me upward; could I perish
While thou, a meteor of the sepulchre,
Didst swathe thyself all round Hope's quiet urn
For ever? He, that saith it, hath o'erstept
The slippery footing of his narrow wit,
And fall'n away from judgment. Thou art light,
To which my spirit leaneth all her flowers,
And length of days, and immortality
Of thought, and freshness ever self-renew'd.
For Time and Grief abode too long with Life,
And, like all other friends i' the world, at last
They grew aweary of her fellowship:
So Time and Grief did beckon unto Death,

And Death drew nigh and beat the doors of Life;
But thou didst sit alone in the inner house,
A wakeful portress, and didst parle with Death,—
'This is a charmed dwelling which I hold;'
So Death gave back, and would no further come.
Yet is my life nor in the present time,
Nor in the present place. To me alone,
Push'd from his chair of regal heritage,
The Present is the vassal of the Past:
So that, in that I *have* lived, do I live,
And cannot die, and am, in having been—
A portion of the pleasant yesterday,
Thrust forward on to-day and out of place;
A body journeying onward, sick with toil,
The weight as if of age upon my limbs,
The grasp of hopeless grief about my heart,
And all the senses weaken'd, save in that,
Which long ago they had glean'd and garner'd up
Into the granaries of memory—
The clear brow, bulwark of the precious brain,
Chink'd as you see, and seam'd—and all the while

The light soul twines and mingles with the growths
Of vigorous early days, attracted, won,
Married, made one with, molten into all
The beautiful in Past of act or place,
And like the all-enduring camel, driven
Far from the diamond fountain by the palms,
Who toils across the middle moonlit nights,
Or when the white heats of the blinding noons
Beat from the concave sand; yet in him keeps
A draught of that sweet fountain that he loves,
To stay his feet from falling, and his spirit
From bitterness of death.

Ye ask me, friends,
When I began to love. How should I tell you?
Or from the after-fulness of my heart,
Flow back again unto my slender spring
And first of love, tho' every turn and depth
Between is clearer in my life than all
Its present flow. Ye know not what ye ask.
How should the broad and open flower tell

What sort of bud it was, when, prest together
In its green sheath, close-lapt in silken folds,
It seem'd to keep its sweetness to itself,
Yet was not the less sweet for that it seem'd?
For young Life knows not when young Life was born,
But takes it all for granted: neither Love,
Warm in the heart, his cradle, can remember
Love in the womb, but resteth satisfied,
Looking on her that brought him to the light:
Or as men know not when they fall asleep
Into delicious dreams, our other life,
So know I not when I began to love.
This is my sum of knowledge—that my love
Grew with myself—say rather, was my growth,
My inward sap, the hold I have on earth,
My outward circling air wherewith I breathe,
Which yet upholds my life, and evermore
Is to me daily life and daily death:
For how should I have lived and not have loved?
Can ye take off the sweetness from the flower,
The colour and the sweetness from the rose,

And place them by themselves; or set apart
Their motions and their brightness from the stars,
And then point out the flower or the star?
Or build a wall betwixt my life and love,
And tell me where I am? 'Tis even thus:
In that I live I love; because I love
I live: whate'er is fountain to the one
Is fountain to the other; and whene'er
Our God unknits the riddle of the one,
There is no shade or fold of mystery
Swathing the other.

Many, many years,
(For they seem many and my most of life,
And well I could have linger'd in that porch,
So unproportion'd to the dwelling-place,)
In the Maydews of childhood, opposite
The flush and dawn of youth, we lived together,
Apart, alone together on those hills.

Before he saw my day my father died,
And he was happy that he saw it not;

But I and the first daisy on his grave
From the same clay came into light at once.
As Love and I do number equal years,
So she, my love, is of an age with me.
How like each other was the birth of each!
On the same morning, almost the same hour,
Under the selfsame aspect of the stars,
(Oh falsehood of all starcraft!) we were born.
How like each other was the birth of each!
The sister of my mother—she that bore
Camilla close beneath her beating heart,
Which to the imprison'd spirit of the child,
With its true-touched pulses in the flow
And hourly visitation of the blood,
Sent notes of preparation manifold,
And mellow'd echoes of the outer world—
My mother's sister, mother of my love,
Who had a twofold claim upon my heart,
One twofold mightier than the other was,
In giving so much beauty to the world,
And so much wealth as God had charged her with—

Loathing to put it from herself for ever,
Left her own life with it; and dying thus,
Crown'd with her highest act the placid face
And breathless body of her good deeds past.

So were we born, so orphan'd. She was motherless
And I without a father. So from each
Of those two pillars which from earth uphold
Our childhood, one had fallen away, and all
The careful burthen of our tender years
Trembled upon the other. He that gave
Her life, to me delightedly fulfill'd
All lovingkindnesses, all offices
Of watchful care and trembling tenderness.
He waked for both: he pray'd for both: he slept
Dreaming of both: nor was his love the less
Because it was divided, and shot forth
Boughs on each side, laden with wholesome shade,
Wherein we nested sleeping or awake,
And sang aloud the matin-song of life.

She was my foster-sister: on one arm
The flaxen ringlets of our infancies
Wander'd, the while we rested: one soft lap
Pillow'd us both: a common light of eyes
Was on us as we lay: our baby lips,
Kissing one bosom, ever drew from thence
The stream of life, one stream, one life, one blood,
One sustenance, which, still as thought grew large,
Still larger moulding all the house of thought,
Made all our tastes and fancies like, perhaps—
All—all but one; and strange to me, and sweet,
Sweet thro' strange years to know that whatsoe'er
Our general mother meant for me alone,
Our mutual mother dealt to both of us:
So what was earliest mine in earliest life,
I shared with her in whom myself remains.
As was our childhood, so our infancy,
They tell me, was a very miracle
Of fellow-feeling and communion.
They tell me that we would not be alone,—
We cried when we were parted; when I wept,

Her smile lit up the rainbow on my tears,
Stay'd on the cloud of sorrow; that we loved
The sound of one-another's voices more
Than the gray cuckoo loves his name, and learn'd
To lisp in tune together; that we slept
In the same cradle always, face to face.
Heart beating time to heart, lip pressing lip,
Folding each other, breathing on each other,
Dreaming together (dreaming of each other
They should have added), till the morning light
Sloped thro' the pines, upon the dewy pane
Falling, unseal'd our eyelids, and we woke
To gaze upon each other. If this be true,
At thought of which my whole soul languishes
And faints, and hath no pulse, no breath—as tho'
A man in some still garden should infuse
Rich atar in the bosom of the rose,
Till, drunk with its own wine, and overfull
Of sweetness, and in smelling of itself,
It fall on its own thorns—if this be true—
And that way my wish leads me evermore

Still to believe it—'tis so sweet a thought,
Why in the utter stillness of the soul
Doth question'd memory answer not, nor tell
Of this our earliest, our closest-drawn,
Most loveliest, earthly-heavenliest harmony?
O blossom'd portal of the lonely house,
Green prelude, April promise, glad new-year
Of Being, which with earliest violets
And lavish carol of clear-throated larks
Fill'd all the March of life!—I will not speak of thee,
These have not seen thee, these can never know thee,
They cannot understand me. Pass we then
A term of eighteen years. Ye would but laugh,
If I should tell you how I hoard in thought
The faded rhymes and scraps of ancient crones,
Gray relics of the nurseries of the world,
Which are as gems set in my memory,
Because she learnt them with me; or what use
To know her father left us just before
The daffodil was blown? or how we found
The dead man cast upon the shore? All this

Seems to the quiet daylight of your minds
But cloud and smoke, and in the dark of mine
Is traced with flame. Move with me to the event.
There came a glorious morning, such a one
As dawns but once a season. Mercury
On such a morning would have flung himself
From cloud to cloud, and swum with balanced wings
To some tall mountain: when I said to her,
'A day for Gods to stoop,' she answered, 'Ay,
And men to soar:' for as that other gazed,
Shading his eyes till all the fiery cloud,
The prophet and the chariot and the steeds,
Suck'd into oneness like a little star
Were drunk into the inmost blue, we stood,
When first we came from out the pines at noon,
With hands for eaves, uplooking and almost
Waiting to see some blessed shape in heaven,
So bathed we were in brilliance. Never yet
Before or after have I known the spring
Pour with such sudden deluges of light
Into the middle summer; for that day

Love, rising, shook his wings, and charged the winds
With spiced May-sweets from bound to bound, and
blew
Fresh fire into the sun, and from within
Burst thro' the heated buds, and sent his soul
Into the songs of birds, and touch'd far-off
His mountain-altars, his high hills, with flame
Milder and purer.

Thro' the rocks we wound:
The great pine shook with lonely sounds of joy
That came on the sea-wind. As mountain streams
Our bloods ran free: the sunshine seem'd to brood
More warmly on the heart than on the brow.
We often paused, and, looking back, we saw
The clefts and openings in the mountains fill'd
With the blue valley and the glistening brooks,
And all the low dark groves, a land of love!
A land of promise, a land of memory,
A land of promise flowing with the milk
And honey of delicious memories!

And down to sea, and far as eye could ken,
Each way from verge to verge a Holy Land,
Still growing holier as you near'd the bay,
For there the Temple stood.

When we had reach'd
The grassy platform on some hill, I stoop'd,
I gather'd the wild herbs, and for her brows
And mine made garlands of the selfsame flower,
Which she took smiling, and with my work thus
Crown'd her clear forehead. Once or twice she told me
(For I remember all things) to let grow
The flowers that run poison in their veins.
She said, 'The evil flourish in the world.'
Then playfully she gave herself the lie—
'Nothing in nature is unbeautiful;
So, brother, pluck and spare not.' So I wove
Ev'n the dull-blooded poppy-stem, 'whose flower,
Hued with the scarlet of a fierce sunrise,
Like to the wild youth of an evil prince,

Is without sweetness, but who crowns himself
Above the naked poisons of his heart
In his old age.' A graceful thought of hers
Grav'n on my fancy! And oh, how like a nymph,
A stately mountain nymph she look'd! how native
Unto the hills she trod on! While I gazed
My coronal slowly disentwined itself
And fell between us both; tho' while I gazed
My spirit leap'd as with those thrills of bliss
That strike across the soul in prayer, and show us
That we are surely heard. Methought a light
Burst from the garland I had wov'n, and stood
A solid glory on her bright black hair;
A light methought broke from her dark, dark eyes,
And shot itself into the singing winds;
A mystic light flash'd ev'n from her white robe
As from a glass in the sun, and fell about
My footsteps on the mountains.

Last we came
To what our people call 'The Hill of Woe.'

A bridge is there, that, look'd at from beneath
Seems but a cobweb filament to link
The yawning of an earthquake-cloven chasm.
And thence one night, when all the winds were loud,
A woful man (for so the story went)
Had thrust his wife and child and dash'd himself
Into the dizzy depth below. Below,
Fierce in the strength of far descent, a stream
Flies with a shatter'd foam along the chasm.
The path was perilous, loosely strown with crags:
We mounted slowly; yet to both there came
The joy of life in steepness overcome,
And victories of ascent, and looking down
On all that had look'd down on us; and joy
In breathing nearer heaven; and joy to me,
High over all the azure-circled earth,
To breathe with her as if in heaven itself;
And more than joy that I to her became
Her guardian and her angel, raising her
Still higher, past all peril, until she saw
Beneath her feet the region far away,

Beyond the nearest mountain's bosky brows,
Arise in open prospect—heath and hill,
And hollow lined and wooded to the lips,
And steep-down walls of battlemented rock
Gilded with broom, or shatter'd into spires,
And glory of broad waters interfused,
Whence rose as it were breath and steam of gold,
And over all the great wood rioting
And climbing, streak'd or starr'd at intervals
With falling brook or blossom'd bush—and last,
Framing the mighty landscape to the west,
A purple range of mountain-cones, between
Whose interspaces gush'd in blinding bursts
The incorporate blaze of sun and sea.

At length
Descending from the point and standing both,
There on the tremulous bridge, that from beneath
Had seem'd a gossamer filament up in air,
We paused amid the splendour. All the west
And ev'n unto the middle south was ribb'd

And barr'd with bloom on bloom. The sun below,
Held for a space 'twixt cloud and wave, shower'd down
Rays of a mighty circle, weaving over
That various wilderness a tissue of light
Unparallel'd. On the other side, the moon,
Half-melted into thin blue air, stood still,
And pale and fibrous as a wither'd leaf,
Nor yet endured in presence of His eyes
To indue his lustre; most unloverlike,
Since in his absence full of light and joy,
And giving light to others. But this most,
Next to her presence whom I loved so well,
Spoke loudly even into my inmost heart
As to my outward hearing: the loud stream,
Forth issuing from his portals in the crag
(A visible link unto the home of my heart),
Ran amber toward the west, and nigh the sea
Parting my own loved mountains was received,
Shorn of its strength, into the sympathy
Of that small bay, which out to open main
Glow'd intermingling close beneath the sun.

Spirit of Love! that little hour was bound
Shut in from Time, and dedicate to thee:
Thy fires from heaven had touch'd it, and the earth
They fell on became hallow'd evermore.

We turn'd: our eyes met: hers were bright, and mine
Were dim with floating tears, that shot the sunset
In lightnings round me; and my name was borne
Upon her breath. Henceforth my name has been
A hallow'd memory like the names of old,
A center'd, glory-circled memory,
And a peculiar treasure, brooking not
Exchange or currency: and in that hour
A hope flow'd round me, like a golden mist
Charm'd amid eddies of melodious airs,
A moment, ere the onward whirlwind shatter it,
Waver'd and floated—which was less than Hope,
Because it lack'd the power of perfect Hope;
But which was more and higher than all Hope,
Because all other Hope had lower aim;

Even that this name to which her gracious lips
Did lend such gentle utterance, this one name,
In some obscure hereafter, might inwreathe
(How lovelier, nobler then!) her life, her love,
With my life, love, soul, spirit, and heart and strength.
'Brother,' she said, 'let this be call'd henceforth
The Hill of Hope;' and I replied, 'O sister,
My will is one with thine; the Hill of Hope.'
Nevertheless, we did not change the name.

I did not speak: I could not speak my love.
Love lieth deep: Love dwells not in lip-depths.
Love wraps his wings on either side the heart,
Constraining it with kisses close and warm,
Absorbing all the incense of sweet thoughts
So that they pass not to the shrine of sound.
Else had the life of that delighted hour
Drunk in the largeness of the utterance
Of Love; but how should Earthly measure mete
The Heavenly-unmeasured or unlimited Love,
Who scarce can tune his high majestic sense

Unto the thundersong that wheels the spheres,
Scarce living in the Æolian harmony,
And flowing odour of the spacious air,
Scarce housed within the circle of this Earth,
Be cabin'd up in words and syllables,
Which pass with that which breathes them? Sooner
Earth
Might go round Heaven, and the strait girth of Time
Inswathe the fulness of Eternity,
Than language grasp the infinite of Love.

O day which did enwomb that happy hour,
Thou art blessed in the years, divinest day!
O Genius of that hour which dost uphold
Thy coronal of glory like a God,
Amid thy melancholy mates far-seen,
Who walk before thee, ever turning round
To gaze upon thee till their eyes are dim
With dwelling on the light and depth of thine,
Thy name is ever worshipp'd among hours!
Had I died then, I had not seem'd to die,

For bliss stood round me like the light of Heaven,—
Had I died then, I had not known the death;
Yea had the Power from whose right hand the light
Of Life issueth, and from whose left hand floweth
The Shadow of Death, perennial effluences,
Whereof to all that draw the wholesome air,
Somewhile the one must overflow the other;
Then had he stemm'd my day with night, and driven
My current to the fountain whence it sprang,—
Even his own abiding excellence—
On me, methinks, that shock of gloom had fall'n
Unfelt, and in this glory I had merged
The other, like the sun I gazed upon,
Which seeming for the moment due to death,
And dipping his head low beneath the verge,
Yet bearing round about him his own day,
In confidence of unabated strength,
Steppeth from Heaven to Heaven, from light to
light,
And holdeth his undimmed forehead far
Into a clearer zenith, pure of cloud.

We trod the shadow of the downward hill;
We past from light to dark. On the other side
Is scoop'd a cavern and a mountain hall,
Which none have fathom'd. If you go far in
(The country people rumour) you may hear
The moaning of the woman and the child,
Shut in the secret chambers of the rock.
I too have heard a sound—perchance of streams
Running far on within its inmost halls,
The home of darkness; but the cavern-mouth,
Half overtrailed with a wanton weed,
Gives birth to a brawling brook, that passing lightly
Adown a natural stair of tangled roots,
Is presently received in a sweet grave
Of eglantines, a place of burial
Far lovelier than its cradle; for unseen,
But taken with the sweetness of the place,
It makes a constant bubbling melody
That drowns the nearer echoes. Lower down
Spreads out a little lake, that, flooding, leaves
Low banks of yellow sand; and from the woods

That belt it rise three dark, tall cypresses,—
Three cypresses, symbols of mortal woe,
That men plant over graves.

Hither we came,
And sitting down upon the golden moss,
Held converse sweet and low—low converse sweet,
In which our voices bore least part. The wind
Told a lovetale beside us, how he woo'd
The waters, and the waters answering lisp'd
To kisses of the wind, that, sick with love,
Fainted at intervals, and grew again
To utterance of passion. Ye cannot shape
Fancy so fair as is this memory.
Methought all excellence that ever was
Had drawn herself from many thousand years,
And all the separate Edens of this earth,
To centre in this place and time. I listen'd,
And her words stole with most prevailing sweetness
Into my heart, as thronging fancies come
To boys and girls when summer days are new,

And soul and heart and body are all at ease:
What marvel my Camilla told me all?
It was so happy an hour, so sweet a place,
And I was as the brother of her blood,
And by that name I moved upon her breath;
Dear name, which had too much of nearness in it
And heralded the distance of this time!
At first her voice was very sweet and low,
As if she were afraid of utterance;
But in the onward current of her speech,
(As echoes of the hollow-banked brooks
Are fashion'd by the channel which they keep),
Her words did of their meaning borrow sound,
Her cheek did catch the colour of her words.
I heard and trembled, yet I could but hear;
My heart paused—my raised eyelids would not fall,
But still I kept my eyes upon the sky.
I seem'd the only part of Time stood still,
And saw the motion of all other things;
While her words, syllable by syllable,
Like water, drop by drop, upon my ear

Fell; and I wish'd, yet wish'd her not to speak;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
What marvel my Camilla told me all
Her maiden dignities of Hope and Love—
'Perchance,' she said, 'return'd.' Even then the stars
Did tremble in their stations as I gazed;
But she spake on, for I did name no wish,
No wish—no hope. Hope was not wholly dead,
But breathing hard at the approach of Death,—
Camilla, my Camilla, who was mine
No longer in the dearest sense of mine—
For all the secret of her inmost heart,
And all the maiden empire of her mind,
Lay like a map before me, and I saw
There, where I hoped myself to reign as king,
There, where that day I crown'd myself as king,
There in my realm and even on my throne,
Another! then it seem'd as tho' a link
Of some tight chain within my inmost frame
Was riven in twain: that life I heeded not
Flow'd from me, and the darkness of the grave,

The darkness of the grave and utter night,
Did swallow up my vision; at her feet,
Even the feet of her I loved, I fell,
Smit with exceeding sorrow unto Death.

Then had the earth beneath me yawning cloven
With such a sound as when an iceberg splits
From cope to base—had Heaven from all her doors,
With all her golden thresholds clashing, roll'd
Her heaviest thunder—I had lain as dead,
Mute, blind and motionless as then I lay;
Dead, for henceforth there was no life for me!
Mute, for henceforth what use were words to me!
Blind, for the day was as the night to me!
The night to me was kinder than the day;
The night in pity took away my day,
Because my grief as yet was newly born
Of eyes too weak to look upon the light;
And thro' the hasty notice of the ear
Frail Life was startled from the tender love
Of him she brooded over. Would I had lain

Until the plaited ivy-tress had wound
Round my worn limbs, and the wild brier had driven
Its knotted thorns thro' my unpaining brows,
Leaning its roses on my faded eyes.
The wind had blown above me, and the rain
Had fall'n upon me, and the gilded snake
Had nestled in this bosom-throne of Love,
But I had been at rest for evermore.

Long time entrancement held me. All too soon
Life (like a wanton too-officious friend,
Who will not *hear* denial, vain and rude
With proffer of unwish'd-for services)
Entering all the avenues of sense
Past thro' into his citadel, the brain,
With hated warmth of apprehensiveness.
And first the chillness of the sprinkled brook
Smote on my brows, and then I seem'd to hear
Its murmur, as the drowning seaman hears,
Who with his head below the surface dropt
Listens the muffled booming indistinct

Of the confused floods, and dimly knows
His head shall rise no more: and then came in
The white light of the weary moon above,
Diffused and molten into flaky cloud.
Was my sight drunk that it did shape to me
Him who should own that name? Were it not well
If so be that the echo of that name
Ringing within the fancy had updrawn
A fashion and a phantasm of the form
It should attach to? Phantom!—had the ghastliest
That ever lusted for a body, sucking
The foul steam of the grave to thicken by it,
There in the shuddering moonlight brought its face
And what it has for eyes as close to mine
As he did—better that than his, than he
The friend, the neighbour, Lionel, the beloved,
The loved, the lover, the happy Lionel,
The low-voiced, tender-spirited Lionel,
All joy, to whom my agony was a joy.
O how her choice did leap forth from his eyes!
O how her love did clothe itself in smiles

About his lips! and—not one moment's grace—
Then when the effect weigh'd seas upon my head
To come my way! to twit me with the cause!

Was not the land as free thro' all her ways
To him as me? Was not his wont to walk
Between the going light and growing night?
Had I not learnt my loss before he came?
Could that be more because he came my way?
Why should he not come my way if he would?
And yet to-night, to-night—when all my wealth
Flash'd from me in a moment and I fell
Beggar'd for ever—why *should* he come my way
Robed in those robes of light I must not wear,
With that great crown of beams about his brows—
Come like an angel to a damned soul,
To tell him of the bliss he had with God—
Come like a careless and a greedy heir
That scarce can wait the reading of the will
Before he takes possession? Was mine a mood
To be invaded rudely, and not rather

A sacred, secret, unapproached woe,
Unspeakable? I was shut up with Grief;
She took the body of my past delight,
Narded and swathed and balm'd it for herself,
And laid it in a sepulchre of rock
Never to rise again. I was led mute
Into her temple like a sacrifice;
I was the High Priest in her holiest place,
Not to be loudly broken in upon.

Oh friend, thoughts deep and heavy as these well-
nigh
O'erbore the limits of my brain: but he
Bent o'er me, and my neck his arm upstay'd.
I thought it was an adder's fold, and once
I strove to disengage myself, but fail'd,
Being so feeble: she bent above me, too;
Wan was her cheek; for whatsoe'er of blight
Lives in the dewy touch of pity had made
The red rose there a pale one—and her eyes-
I saw the moonlight glitter on their tears—

And some few drops of that distressful rain
Fell on my face, and her long ringlets moved,
Drooping and beaten by the breeze, and brush'd
My fallen forehead in their to and fro,
For in the sudden anguish of her heart
Loosed from their simple thrall they had flow'd abroad,
And floated on and parted round her neck,
Mantling her form halfway. She, when I woke,
Something she ask'd, I know not what, and ask'd,
Unanswer'd, since I spake not; for the sound
Of that dear voice so musically low,
And now first heard with any sense of pain,
As it had taken life away before,
Choked all the syllables, that strove to rise
From my full heart.

The blissful lover, too,
From his great hoard of happiness distill'd
Some drops of solace; like a vain rich man,
That, having always prosper'd in the world,
Folding his hands, deals comfortable words

To hearts wounded for ever; yet, in truth,
Fair speech was his and delicate of phrase,
Falling in whispers on the sense, address'd
More to the inward than the outward ear,
As rain of the midsummer midnight soft,
Scarce-heard, recalling fragrance and the green
Of the dead spring: but mine was wholly dead,
No bud, no leaf, no flower, no fruit for me.
Yet who had done, or who had suffer'd wrong?
And why was I to darken their pure love,
If, as I found, they two did love each other,
Because my own was darken'd? Why was I
To cross between their happy star and them?
To stand a shadow by their shining doors,
And vex them with my darkness? Did I love her?
Ye know that I did love her; to this present
My full-orb'd love has waned not. Did I love her,
And could I look upon her tearful eyes?
What had *she* done to weep? Why should *she* weep?
O innocent of spirit—let my heart
Break rather—whom the gentlest airs of Heaven

Should kiss with an unwonted gentleness.
Her love did murder mine? What then? She deem'd
I wore a brother's mind: she call'd me brother:
She told me all her love: she shall not weep.

The brightness of a burning thought, awhile
In battle with the glooms of my dark will,
Moonlike emerged, and to itself lit up
There on the depth of an unfathom'd woe
Reflex of action. Starting up at once,
As from a dismal dream of my own death,
I, for I loved her, lost my love in Love;
I, for I loved her, graspt the hand she lov'd,
And laid it in her own, and sent my cry
Thro' the blank night to Him who loving made
The happy and the unhappy love, that He
Would hold the hand of blessing over them,
Lionel, the happy, and her, and her, his bride!
Let them so love that men and boys may say,
'Lo! how they love each other!' till their love

Shall ripen to a proverb, unto all
Known, when their faces are forgot in the land—
One golden dream of love, from which may death
Awake them with heaven's music in a life
More living to some happier happiness,
Swallowing its precedent in victory.
And as for me, Camilla, as for me,—
The dew of tears is an unwholesome dew,
They will but sicken the sick plant the more.
Deem that I love thee but as brothers do,
So shalt thou love me still as sisters do;
Or if thou dream aught farther, dream but how
I could have loved thee, had there been none else
To love as lovers, loved again by thee.

Or this, or somewhat like to this, I spake,
When I beheld her weep so ruefully;
For sure my love should ne'er indue the front
And mask of Hate, who lives on others' moans.
Shall Love pledge Hatred in her bitter draughts,
And batten on her poisons? Love forbid!

Love passeth not the threshold of cold Hate,
And Hate is strange beneath the roof of Love.
O Love, if thou be'st Love, dry up these tears
Shed for the love of Love; for tho' mine image,
The subject of thy power, be cold in her,
Yet, like cold snow, it melteth in the source
Of these sad tears, and feeds their downward flow.
So Love, arraign'd to judgment and to death,
Received unto himself a part of blame,
Being guiltless, as an innocent prisoner,
Who, when the woful sentence hath been past,
And all the clearness of his fame hath gone
Beneath the shadow of the curse of man,
First falls asleep in swoon, wherefrom awaked,
And looking round upon his tearful friends,
Forthwith and in his agony conceives
A shameful sense as of a cleaving crime—
For whence without some guilt should such grief be?

So died that hour, and fell into the abysm
Of forms outworn, but not to me outworn,

Who never hail'd another—was there one?
There might be one—one other, worth the life
That made it sensible. So that hour died
Like odour rapt into the winged wind
Borne into alien lands and far away.

There be some hearts so airily built, that they,
They—when their love is wreck'd—if Love can wreck—
On that sharp ridge of utmost doom ride highly
Above the perilous seas of Change and Chance;
Nay, more, hold out the lights of cheerfulness;
As the tall ship, that many a dreary year
Knit to some dismal sandbank far at sea,
All thro' the livelong hours of utter dark,
Showers slanting light upon the dolorous wave.
For me—what light, what gleam on those black ways
Where Love could walk with banish'd Hope no more?

It was ill-done to part you, Sisters fair;
Love's arms were wreath'd about the neck of Hope,

And Hope kiss'd Love, and Love drew in her breath
In that close kiss, and drank her whisper'd tales.
They said that Love would die when Hope was gone,
And Love mourn'd long, and sorrow'd after Hope;
At last she sought out Memory, and they trod
The same old paths where Love had walk'd with Hope,
And Memory fed the soul of Love with tears.

II.

FROM that time forth I would not see her more;
But many weary moons I lived alone—
Alone, and in the heart of the great forest.
Sometimes upon the hills beside the sea
All day I watch'd the floating isles of shade,
And sometimes on the shore, upon the sands
Insensibly I drew her name, until
The meaning of the letters shot into
My brain; anon the wanton billow wash'd
Them over, till they faded like my love.
The hollow caverns heard me—the black brooks
Of the midforest heard me—the soft winds,
Laden with thistledown and seeds of flowers,
Paused in their course to hear me, for my voice
Was all of thee: the merry linnet knew me,
The squirrel knew me, and the dragonfly

Shot by me like a flash of purple fire.
The rough brier tore my bleeding palms; the hemlock,
Brow-high, did strike my forehead as I past;
Yet trod I not the wildflower in my path,
Nor bruised the wildbird's egg.

Was this the end?
Why grew we then together in one plot?
Why fed we from one fountain? drew one sun?
Why were our mothers' branches of one stem?
Why were we one in all things, save in that
Where to have been one had been the cope and crown
Of all I hoped and fear'd?—if that same nearness
Were father to this distance, and that *one*
Vaunt courier to this *double?* if Affection
Living slew Love, and Sympathy hew'd out
The bosom-sepulchre of Sympathy?

Chiefly I sought the cavern and the hill
Where last we roam'd together, for the sound
Of the loud stream was pleasant, and the wind

Came wooingly with woodbine smells. Sometimes
All day I sat within the cavern-mouth,
Fixing my eyes on those three cypress-cones
That spired above the wood; and with mad hand
Tearing the bright leaves of the ivy-screen,
I cast them in the noisy brook beneath,
And watch'd them till they vanish'd from my sight
Beneath the bower of wreathed eglantines:
And all the fragments of the living rock
(Huge blocks, which some old trembling of the world
Had loosen'd from the mountain, till they fell
Half-digging their own graves) these in my agony
Did I make bare of all the golden moss,
Wherewith the dashing runnel in the spring
Had liveried them all over. In my brain
The spirit seem'd to flag from thought to thought,
As moonlight wandering thro' a mist: my blood
Crept like marsh drains thro' all my languid limbs;
The motions of my heart seem'd far within me,
Unfrequent, low, as tho' it told its pulses;
And yet it shook me, that my frame would shudder,

As if 'twere drawn asunder by the rack.
But over the deep graves of Hope and Fear,
And all the broken palaces of the Past,
Brooded one master-passion evermore,
Like to a low-hung and a fiery sky
Above some fair metropolis, earth-shock'd,—
Hung round with ragged rims and burning folds,—
Embathing all with wild and woful hues,
Great hills of ruins, and collapsed masses
Of thundershaken columns indistinct,
And fused together in the tyrannous light—
Ruins, the ruin of all my life and me!

Sometimes I thought Camilla was no more,
Some one had told me she was dead, and ask'd
If I would see her burial: then I seem'd
To rise, and through the forest-shadow borne
With more than mortal swiftness, I ran down
The steepy sea-bank, till I came upon
The rear of a procession, curving round
The silver-sheeted bay: in front of which

Six stately virgins, all in white, upbare
A broad earth-sweeping pall of whitest lawn,
Wreathed round the bier with garlands: in the distance,
From out the yellow woods upon the hill
Look'd forth the summit and the pinnacles
Of a gray steeple—thence at intervals
A low bell tolling. All the pageantry,
Save those six virgins which upheld the bier,
Were stoled from head to foot in flowing black;
One walk'd abreast with me, and veil'd his brow,
And he was loud in weeping and in praise
Of her, we follow'd: a strong sympathy
Shook all my soul: I flung myself upon him
In tears and cries: I told him all my love,
How I had loved her from the first; whereat
He shrank and howl'd, and from his brow drew back
His hand to push me from him; and the face,
The very face and form of Lionel
Flash'd thro' my eyes into my innermost brain,
And at his feet I seem'd to faint and fall,

To fall and die away. I could not rise
Albeit I strove to follow. They past on,
The lordly Phantasms! in their floating folds
They past and were no more: but I had fallen
Prone by the dashing runnel on the grass.

Alway the inaudible invisible thought,
Artificer and subject, lord and slave,
Shaped by the audible and visible,
Moulded the audible and visible;
All crisped sounds of wave and leaf and wind,
Flatter'd the fancy of my fading brain;
The cloud-pavilion'd element, the wood,
The mountain, the three cypresses, the cave,
Storm, sunset, glows and glories of the moon
Below black firs, when silent-creeping winds
Laid the long night in silver streaks and bars,
Were wrought into the tissue of my dream:
The moanings in the forest, the loud brook,
Cries of the partridge like a rusty key
Turn'd in a lock, owl-whoop and dorhawk-whirr

Awoke me not, but were a part of sleep,
And voices in the distance calling to me
And in my vision bidding me dream on,
Like sounds without the twilight realm of dreams,
Which wander round the bases of the hills,
And murmur at the low-dropt eaves of sleep,
Half-entering the portals. Oftentimes
The vision had fair prelude, in the end
Opening on darkness, stately vestibules
To caves and shows of Death: whether the mind,
With some revenge—even to itself unknown,—
Made strange division of its suffering
With her, whom to have suffering view'd had been
Extremest pain; or that the clear-eyed Spirit,
Being blunted in the Present, grew at length
Prophetical and prescient of whate'er
The Future had in store: or that which most
Enchains belief, the sorrow of my spirit
Was of so wide a compass it took in
All I had loved, and my dull agony,

Ideally to her transferr'd, became
Anguish intolerable.

The day waned;
Alone I sat with her: about my brow
Her warm breath floated in the utterance
Of silver-chorded tones: her lips were sunder'd
With smiles of tranquil bliss, which broke in light
Like morning from her eyes—her eloquent eyes,
(As I have seen them many a hundred times)
Fill'd all with pure clear fire, thro' mine down rain'd
Their spirit-searching splendours. As a vision
Unto a haggard prisoner, iron-stay'd
In damp and dismal dungeons underground,
Confined on points of faith, when strength is shock'd
With torment, and expectancy of worse
Upon the morrow, thro' the ragged walls,
All unawares before his half-shut eyes,
Comes in upon him in the dead of night,
And with the excess of sweetness and of awe,
Makes the heart tremble, and the sight run over

Upon his steely gyves; so those fair eyes
Shone on my darkness, forms which ever stood
Within the magic cirque of memory,
Invisible but deathless, waiting still
The edict of the will to reassume
The semblance of those rare realities
Of which they were the mirrors. Now the light
Which was their life, burst through the cloud of thought
Keen, irrepressible.

It was a room
Within the summer-house of which I spake,
Hung round with paintings of the sea, and one
A vessel in mid-ocean, her heaved prow
Clambering, the mast bent and the ravin wind
In her sail roaring. From the outer day,
Betwixt the close-set ivies came a broad
And solid beam of isolated light,
Crowded with driving atomies, and fell
Slanting upon that picture, from prime youth

Well-known well-loved. She drew it long ago
Forthgazing on the waste and open sea,
One morning when the upblown billow ran
Shoreward beneath red clouds, and I had pour'd
Into the shadowing pencil's naked forms
Colour and life: it was a bond and seal
Of friendship, spoken of with tearful smiles;
A monument of childhood and of love;
The poesy of childhood; my lost love
Symbol'd in storm. We gazed on it together
In mute and glad remembrance, and each heart
Grew closer to the other, and the eye
Was riveted and charm-bound, gazing like
The Indian on a still-eyed snake, low-couch'd—
A beauty which is death; when all at once
That painted vessel, as with inner life,
Began to heave upon that painted sea;
An earthquake, my loud heart-beats, made the ground
Reel under us, and all at once, soul, life
And breath and motion, past and flow'd away
To those unreal billows: round and round

A whirlwind caught and bore us; mighty gyres
Rapid and vast, of hissing spray wind-driven
Far thro' the dizzy dark. Aloud she shriek'd;
My heart was cloven with pain; I wound my arms
About her: we whirl'd giddily; the wind
Sung; but I clasp'd her without fear: her weight
Shrank in my grasp, and over my dim eyes,
And parted lips which drank her breath, down-hung
The jaws of Death: I, groaning, from me flung
Her empty phantom: all the sway and whirl
Of the storm dropt to windless calm, and I
Down welter'd thro' the dark ever and ever.

III.

I CAME one day and sat among the stones
Strewn in the entry of the moaning cave;
A morning air, sweet after rain, ran over
The rippling levels of the lake, and blew
Coolness and moisture and all smells of bud
And foliage from the dark and dripping woods
Upon my fever'd brows that shook and throbb'd
From temple unto temple. To what height
The day had grown I know not. Then came on me
The hollow tolling of the bell, and all
The vision of the bier. As heretofore
I walk'd behind with one who veil'd his brow.
Methought by slow degrees the sullen bell
Toll'd quicker, and the breakers on the shore
Sloped into louder surf: those that went with me,
And those that held the bier before my face,
Moved with one spirit round about the bay,
Trod swifter steps; and while I walk'd with these

In marvel at that gradual change, I thought
Four bells instead of one began to ring,
Four merry bells, four merry marriage-bells,
In clanging cadence jangling peal on peal—
A long loud clash of rapid marriage-bells.
Then those who led the van, and those in rear,
Rush'd into dance, and like wild Bacchanals
Fled onward to the steeple in the woods:
I, too, was borne along and felt the blast
Beat on my heated eyelids: all at once
The front rank made a sudden halt; the bells
Lapsed into frightful stillness; the surge fell
From thunder into whispers; those six maids
With shrieks and ringing laughter on the sand
Threw down the bier; the woods upon the hill
Waved with a sudden gust that sweeping down
Took the edges of the pall, and blew it far
Until it hung, a little silver cloud
Over the sounding seas: I turn'd: my heart
Shrank in me, like a snowflake in the hand,
Waiting to see the settled countenance

Of her I loved, adorn'd with fading flowers.
But she from out her death-like chrysalis,
She from her bier, as into fresher life,
My sister, and my cousin, and my love,
Leapt lightly clad in bridal white—her hair
Studded with one rich Provence rose—a light
Of smiling welcome round her lips—her eyes
And cheeks as bright as when she climb'd the hill.
One hand she reach'd to those that came behind,
And while I mused nor yet endured to take
So rich a prize, the man who stood with me
Stept gaily forward, throwing down his robes,
And claspt her hand in his: again the bells
Jangled and clang'd: again the stormy surf
Crash'd in the shingle: and the whirling rout
Led by those two rush'd into dance, and fled
Wind-footed to the steeple in the woods,
Till they were swallow'd in the leafy bowers,
And I stood sole beside the vacant bier.

There, there, my latest vision—then the event!

IV.

THE GOLDEN SUPPER.[1]

(*Another speaks.*)

He flies the event: he leaves the event to me:
Poor Julian—how he rush'd away; the bells,
Those marriage-bells, echoing in ear and heart—
But cast a parting glance at me, you saw,
As who should say 'Continue.' Well he had
One golden hour—of triumph shall I say?
Solace at least—before he left his home.

Would you had seen him in that hour of his!
He moved thro' all of it majestically—
Restrain'd himself quite to the close—but now—

[1] This poem is founded upon a story in Boccaccio. See Introduction, p. 3.

Whether they *were* his lady's marriage-bells,
Or prophets of them in his fantasy,
I never ask'd: but Lionel and the girl
Were wedded, and our Julian came again
Back to his mother's house among the pines.
But these, their gloom, the mountains and the Bay,
The whole land weigh'd him down as Ætna does
The Giant of Mythology: he would go,
Would leave the land for ever, and had gone
Surely, but for a whisper, 'Go not yet,'
Some warning—sent divinely—as it seem'd
By that which follow'd—but of this I deem
As of the visions that he told—the event
Glanced back upon them in his after life,
And partly made them—tho' he knew it not.

And thus he stay'd and would not look at her—
No not for months: but, when the eleventh moon
After their marriage lit the lover's Bay,
Heard yet once more the tolling bell, and said,
Would you could toll me out of life, but found—

All softly as his mother broke it to him—
A crueller reasón than a crazy ear,
For that low knell tolling his lady dead—
Dead—and had lain three days without a pulse:
All that look'd on her had pronounced her dead.
And so they bore her (for in Julian's land
They never nail a dumb head up in elm),
Bore her free-faced to the free airs of heaven,
And laid her in the vault of her own kin.

What did he then? not die: he is here and hale—
Not plunge headforemost from the mountain there,
And leave the name of Lover's Leap: not he:
He knew the meaning of the whisper now,
Thought that he knew it. 'This, I stay'd for this;
O love, I have not seen you for so long.
Now, now, will I go down into the grave,
I will be all alone with all I love,
And kiss her on the lips. She is his no more:
The dead returns to me, and I go down
To kiss the dead.'

The fancy stirr'd him so
He rose and went, and entering the dim vault,
And, making there a sudden light, beheld
All round about him that which all will be.
The light was but a flash, and went again.
Then at the far end of the vault he saw
His lady with the moonlight on her face;
Her breast as in a shadow-prison, bars
Of black and bands of silver, which the moon
Struck from an open grating overhead
High in the wall, and all the rest of her
Drown'd in the gloom and horror of the vault.

'It was my wish,' he said, 'to pass, to sleep,
To rest, to be with her—till the great day
Peal'd on us with that music which rights all,
And raised us hand in hand.' And kneeling there
Down in the dreadful dust that once was man,
Dust, as he said, that once was loving hearts,
Hearts that had beat with such a love as mine—
Not such as mine, no, nor for such as her—

He softly put his arm about her neck
And kiss'd her more than once, till helpless death
And silence made him bold—nay, but I wrong him,
He reverenced his dear lady even in death;
But, placing his true hand upon her heart,
'O, you warm heart,' he moan'd, 'not even death
Can chill you all at once:' then starting, thought
His dreams had come again. 'Do I wake or sleep?
Or am I made immortal, or my love
Mortal once more?' It beat—the heart—it beat:
Faint—but it beat: at which his own began
To pulse with such a vehemence that it drown'd
The feebler motion underneath his hand.
But when at last his doubts were satisfied,
He raised her softly from the sepulchre,
And, wrapping her all over with the cloak
He came in, and now striding fast, and now
Sitting awhile to rest, but evermore
Holding his golden burthen in his arms,
So bore her thro' the solitary land
Back to the mother's house where she was born.

There the good mother's kindly ministering,
With half a night's appliances, recall'd
Her fluttering life: she rais'd an eye that ask'd
'Where?' till the things familiar to her youth
Had made a silent answer: then she spoke
'Here! and how came I here?' and learning it
(They told her somewhat rashly as I think)
At once began to wander and to wail,
'Ay, but you know that you must give me back:
Send! bid him come;' but Lionel was away—
Stung by his loss had vanish'd, none knew where.
'He casts me out,' she wept, 'and goes'—a wail
That seeming something, yet was nothing, born
Not from believing mind, but shatter'd nerve,
Yet haunting Julian, as her own reproof
At some precipitance in her burial.
Then, when her own true spirit had return'd,
'Oh yes, and you,' she said, 'and none but you?
For you have given me life and love again,
And none but you yourself shall tell him of it,
And you shall give me back when he returns.'

'Stay then a little,' answer'd Julian, 'here,
And keep yourself, none knowing, to yourself;
And I will do your will. I may not stay,
No, not an hour; but send me notice of him
When he returns, and then will I return,
And I will make a solemn offering of you
To him you love.' And faintly she replied,
'And I will do *your* will, and none shall know.'

Not know? with such a secret to be known.
But all their house was old and loved them both,
And all the house had known the loves of both;
Had died almost to serve them any way,
And all the land was waste and solitary:
And then he rode away; but after this,
An hour or two, Camilla's travail came
Upon her, and that day a boy was born,
Heir of his face and land, to Lionel.

And thus our lonely lover rode away,
And pausing at a hostel in a marsh,

There fever seized upon him: myself was then
Travelling that land, and meant to rest an hour;
And sitting down to such a base repast,
It makes me angry yet to speak of it—
I heard a groaning overhead, and climb'd
The moulder'd stairs (for everything was vile),
And in a loft, with none to wait on him,
Found, as it seem'd, a skeleton alone,
Raving of dead men's dust and beating hearts.

A dismal hostel in a dismal land,
A flat malarian world of reed and rush!
But there from fever and my care of him
Sprang up a friendship that may help us yet.
For while we roam'd along the dreary coast,
And waited for her message, piece by piece
I learnt the drearier story of his life;
And, tho' he loved and honour'd Lionel,
Found that the sudden wail his lady made
Dwelt in his fancy: did he know her worth,
Her beauty even? should he not be taught,

Ev'n by the price that others set upon it,
The value of that jewel he had to guard?

Suddenly came her notice and we past,
I with our lover to his native Bay.

This love is of the brain, the mind, the soul:
That makes the sequel pure; tho' some of us
Beginning at the sequel know no more.
Not such am I: and yet I say the bird
That will not hear my call, however sweet,
But if my neighbour whistle answers him—
What matter? there are others in the wood.
Yet when I saw her (and I thought him crazed,
Tho' not with such a craziness as needs
A cell and keeper), those dark eyes of hers—
Oh! such dark eyes! and not her eyes alone,
But all from these to where she touch'd on earth,
For such a craziness as Julian's look'd
No less than one divine apology.

So sweetly and so modestly she came
To greet us, her young hero in her arms!
'Kiss him,' she said. 'You gave me life again.
He, but for you, had never seen it once.
His other father you! Kiss him, and then
Forgive him, if his name be Julian too.'

Talk of lost hopes and broken heart! his own
Sent such a flame into his face, I knew
Some sudden vivid pleasure hit him there.

But he was all the more resolved to go,
And sent at once to Lionel, praying him
By that great love they both had borne the dead,
To come and revel for one hour with him
Before he left the land for evermore;
And then to friends—they were not many—who lived
Scatteringly about that lonely land of his,
And bade them to a banquet of farewells.

And Julian made a solemn feast: I never
Sat at a costlier; for all round his hall

From column on to column, as in a wood,
Not such as here—an equatorial one,
Great garlands swung and blossom'd; and beneath,
Heirlooms, and ancient miracles of Art,
Chalice and salver, wines that, Heaven knows when,
Had suck'd the fire of some forgotten sun,
And kept it thro' a hundred years of gloom,
Yet glowing in a heart of ruby—cups
Where nymph and god ran ever round in gold—
Others of glass as costly—some with gems
Moveable and resettable at will,
And trebling all the rest in value—Ah heavens!
Why need I tell you all?—suffice to say
That whatsoever such a house as his,
And his was old, has in it rare or fair
Was brought before the guest: and they, the guests,
Wonder'd at some strange light in Julian's eyes
(I told you that he had his golden hour),
And such a feast, ill-suited as it seem'd
To such a time, to Lionel's loss and his

And that resolved self-exile from a land
He never would revisit, such a feast
So rich, so strange, and stranger ev'n than rich,
But rich as for the nuptials of a king.

And stranger yet, at one end of the hall
Two great funereal curtains, looping down,
Parted a little ere they met the floor,
About a picture of his lady, taken
Some years before, and falling hid the frame.
And just above the parting was a lamp:
So the sweet figure folded round with night
Seem'd stepping out of darkness with a smile.

Well then—our solemn feast—we ate and drank,
And might—the wines being of such nobleness—
Have jested also, but for Julian's eyes,
And something weird and wild about it all:
What was it? for our lover seldom spoke,
Scarce touch'd the meats; but ever and anon
A priceless goblet with a priceless wine

Arising, show'd he drank beyond his use;
And when the feast was near an end, he said:

'There is a custom in the Orient, friends—
I read of it in Persia—when a man
Will honour those who feast with him, he brings
And shows them whatsoever he accounts
Of all his treasures the most beautiful,
Gold, jewels, arms, whatever it may be.
This custom——'

Pausing here a moment, all
The guests broke in upon him with meeting hands
And cries about the banquet—'Beautiful!
Who could desire more beauty at a feast?'

The lover answer'd, 'There is more than one
Here sitting who desires it. Laud me not
Before my time, but hear me to the close.
This custom steps yet further when the guest
Is loved and honour'd to the uttermost.

For after he hath shown him gems or gold,
He brings and sets before him in rich guise
That which is thrice as beautiful as these,
The beauty that is dearest to his heart—
"O my heart's lord, would I could show you," he says,
"Ev'n my heart too." And I propose to-night
To show you what is dearest to my heart,
And my heart too.

'But solve me first a doubt.
I knew a man, nor many years ago;
He had a faithful servant, one who loved
His master more than all on earth beside.
He falling sick, and seeming close on death,
His master would not wait until he died,
But bad his menials bear him from the door,
And leave him in the public way to die.
I knew another, not so long ago,
Who found the dying servant, took him home,
And fed, and cherish'd him, and saved his life.

I ask you now, should this first master claim
His service, whom does it belong to? him
Who thrust him out, or him who saved his life?'

This question, so flung down before the guests,
And balanced either way by each, at length
When some were doubtful how the law would hold,
Was handed over by consent of all
To one who had not spoken, Lionel.

Fair speech was his, and delicate of phrase.
And he beginning languidly—his loss
Weigh'd on him yet—but warming as he went,
Glanced at the point of law, to pass it by,
Affirming that as long as either lived,
By all the laws of love and gratefulness,
The service of the one so saved was due
All to the saver—adding, with a smile,
The first for many weeks—a semi-smile
As at a strong conclusion—'body and soul
And life and limbs, all his to work his will.'

Then Julian made a secret sign to me
To bring Camilla down before them all.
And crossing her own picture as she came,
And looking as much lovelier as herself
Is lovelier than all others—on her head
A diamond circlet, and from under this
A veil, that seemed no more than gilded air,
Flying by each fine ear, an Eastern gauze
With seeds of gold—so, with that grace of hers,
Slow-moving as a wave against the wind,
That flings a mist behind it in the sun—
And bearing high in arms the mighty babe,
The younger Julian, who himself was crown'd
With roses, none so rosy as himself—
And over all her babe and her the jewels
Of many generations of his house
Sparkled and flash'd, for he had decked them out
As for a solemn sacrifice of love—
So she came in:—I am long in telling it,
I never yet beheld a thing so strange,
Sad, sweet, and strange together—floated in—

While all the guests in mute amazement rose—
And slowly pacing to the middle hall,
Before the board, there paused and stood, her breast
Hard-heaving, and her eyes upon her feet,
Not daring yet to glance at Lionel.
But him she carried, him nor lights nor feast
Dazed or amazed, nor eyes of men; who cared
Only to use his own, and staring wide
And hungering for the gilt and jewell'd world
About him, look'd, as he is like to prove,
When Julian goes, the lord of all he saw.

'My guests,' said Julian: 'you are honour'd now
Ev'n to the uttermost: in her behold
Of all my treasures the most beautiful,
Of all things upon earth the dearest to me.'
Then waving us a sign to seat ourselves,
Led his dear lady to a chair of state.
And I, by Lionel sitting, saw his face
Fire, and dead ashes and all fire again
Thrice in a second, felt him tremble too,

And heard him muttering, 'So like, so like;
She never had a sister. I knew none.
Some cousin of his and hers—O God, so like!'
And then he suddenly ask'd her if she were.
She shook, and cast her eyes down, and was dumb.
And then some other question'd if she came
From foreign lands, and still she did not speak.
Another, if the boy were hers: but she
To all their queries answer'd not a word,
Which made the amazement more, till one of them
Said, shuddering, 'Her spectre!' But his friend
Replied, in half a whisper, 'Not at least
The spectre that will speak if spoken to.
Terrible pity, if one so beautiful
Prove, as I almost dread to find her, dumb!'

But Julian, sitting by her, answer'd all:
'She is but dumb, because in her you see
That faithful servant whom we spoke about,
Obedient to her second master now;
Which will not last. I have here to-night a guest

So bound to me by common love and loss—
What! shall I bind him more? in his behalf,
Shall I exceed the Persian, giving him
That which of all things is the dearest to me,
Not only showing? and he himself pronounced
That my rich gift is wholly mine to give.

'Now all be dumb, and promise all of you
Not to break in on what I say by word
Or whisper, while I show you all my heart.'
And then began the story of his love
As here to-day, but not so wordily—
The passionate moment would not suffer that—
Past thro' his visions to the burial; thence
Down to this last strange hour in his own hall;
And then rose up, and with him all his guests
Once more as by enchantment; all but he,
Lionel, who fain had risen, but fell again,
And sat as if in chains—to whom he said:

'Take my free gift, my cousin, for your wife;
And were it only for the giver's sake,

And tho' she seem so like the one you lost,
Yet cast her not away so suddenly,
Lest there be none left here to bring her back:
I leave this land for ever.' Here he ceased.

Then taking his dear lady by one hand,
And bearing on one arm the noble babe,
He slowly brought them both to Lionel.
And there the widower husband and dead wife
Rush'd each at each with a cry, that rather seem'd
For some new death than for a life renew'd;
Whereat the very babe began to wail;
At once they turn'd, and caught and brought him in
To their charm'd circle, and, half killing him
With kisses, round him closed and claspt again.
But Lionel, when at last he freed himself
From wife and child, and lifted up a face
All over glowing with the sun of life,
And love, and boundless thanks—the sight of this
So frighted our good friend, that turning to me

And saying, 'It is over: let us go'—
There were our horses ready at the doors—
We bad them no farewell, but mounting these
He past for ever from his native land;
And I with him, my Julian, back to mine.

BALLADS

AND OTHER POEMS

TO

ALFRED TENNYSON

MY GRANDSON.

GOLDEN-HAIR'D Ally whose name is one with mine,
Crazy with laughter and babble and earth's new wine,
Now that the flower of a year and a half is thine,
O little blossom, O mine, and mine of mine,
Glorious poet who never hast written a line,
Laugh, for the name at the head of my verse is thine.
May'st thou never be wrong'd by the name that is mine!

THE FIRST QUARREL.

(IN THE ISLE OF WIGHT.)

I.

'WAIT a little,' you say, 'you are sure it'll all come right,'
But the boy was born i' trouble, an' looks so wan an' so white:
Wait! an' once I ha' waited—I hadn't to wait for long.
Now I wait, wait, wait for Harry.—No, no, you are doing me wrong!
Harry and I were married: the boy can hold up his head,
The boy was born in wedlock, but after my man was dead;

I ha' work'd for him fifteen years, an' I work an' I wait to the end.

I am all alone in the world, an' you are my only friend.

II.

Doctor, if *you* can wait, I'll tell you the tale o' my life.

When Harry an' I were children, he call'd me his own little wife;

I was happy when I was with him, an' sorry when he was away,

An' when we play'd together, I loved him better than play;

He workt me the daisy chain—he made me the cowslip ball,

He fought the boys that were rude, an' I loved him better than all.

Passionate girl tho' I was, an' often at home in disgrace,

I never could quarrel with Harry—I had but to look
in his face.

III.

There was a farmer in Dorset of Harry's kin, that had
need
Of a good stout lad at his farm; he sent, an' the father
agreed;
So Harry was bound to the Dorsetshire farm for years
an' for years;
I walked with him down to the quay, poor lad, an' we
parted in tears.
The boat was beginning to move, we heard them a-
ringing the bell,
'I'll never love any but you, God bless you, my own
little Nell.'

IV.

I was a child, an' he was a child, an' he came to harm;
There was a girl, a hussy, that workt with him up at
the farm,

One had deceived her an' left her alone with her sin
an' her shame,
And so she was wicked with Harry; the girl was the
most to blame.

v.

And years went over till I that was little had grown so
tall,
The men would say of the maids, 'Our Nelly's the
flower of 'em all.'
I didn't take heed o' *them*, but I taught myself all I
could
To make a good wife for Harry, when Harry came
home for good.

VI.

Often I seem'd unhappy, and often as happy too,
For I heard it abroad in the fields 'I'll never love any
but you;'

'I'll never love any but you' the morning song of the lark,

'I'll never love any but you' the nightingale's hymn in the dark.

VII.

And Harry came home at last, but he look'd at me sidelong and shy,

Vext me a bit, till he told me that so many years had gone by,

I had grown so handsome and tall—that I might ha' forgot him somehow—

For he thought—there were other lads—he was fear'd to look at me now.

VIII.

Hard was the frost in the field, we were married o' Christmas day,

Married among the red berries, an' all as merry as May—

Those were the pleasant times, my house an' my man
were my pride,
We seem'd like ships i' the Channel a-sailing with
wind an' tide.

IX.

But work was scant in the Isle, tho' he tried the vil-
lages round,
So Harry went over the Solent to see if work could be
found;
An' he wrote 'I ha' six weeks' work, little wife, so far
as I know;
I'll come for an hour to-morrow, an' kiss you before
I go.'

X.

So I set to righting the house, for wasn't he coming
that day?
An' I hit on an old deal-box that was push'd in a
corner away,

It was full of old odds an' ends, an' a letter along wi' the rest,
I had better ha' put my naked hand in a hornets' nest.

XI.

'Sweetheart'—this was the letter—this was the letter I read—
'You promised to find me work near you, an' I wish I was dead—
Didn't you kiss me an' promise? you haven't done it, my lad,
An' I almost died o' your going away, an' I wish that I had.'

XII.

I too wish that I had—in the pleasant times that had past,
Before I quarrell'd with Harry—*my* quarrel—the first an' the last.

XIII.

For Harry came in, an' I flung him the letter that drove me wild,
An' he told it me all at once, as simple as any child,
'What can it matter, my lass, what I did wi' my single life?
I ha' been as true to you as ever a man to his wife;
An' *she* wasn't one o' the worst.' 'Then,' I said, 'I'm none o' the best.'
An' he smiled at me, 'Ain't you, my love? Come, come, little wife, let it rest!
The man isn't like the woman, no need to make such a stir.'
But he anger'd me all the more, an' I said 'You were keeping with her,
When I was a-loving you all along an' the same as before.'
An' he didn't speak for a while, an' he anger'd me more and more.

Then he patted my hand in his gentle way, 'Let by-gones be!'

'Bygones! you kept yours hush'd,' I said, 'when you married me!

By-gones ma' be come-agains; an' *she*—in her shame an' her sin—

You'll have her to nurse my child, if I die o' my lying in!

You'll make her its second mother! I hate her—an' I hate you!'

Ah, Harry, my man, you had better ha' beaten me black an' blue

Than ha' spoken as kind as you did, when I were so crazy wi' spite,

'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all come right.'

XIV.

An' he took three turns in the rain, an' I watch'd him, an' when he came in

I felt that my heart was hard, he was all wet thro' to
the skin,
An' I never said 'off wi' the wet,' I never said 'on wi'
the dry,'
So I knew my heart was hard, when he came to bid
me goodbye.
'You said that you hated me, Ellen, but that isn't true,
you know;
I am going to leave you a bit—you'll kiss me before
I go?

XV.

'Going! you're going to her—kiss her—if you will,'
I said—
I was near my time wi' the boy, I must ha' been
light i' my head—
'I had sooner be cursed than kiss'd!'—I didn't know
well what I meant,
But I turn'd my face from *him*, an' he turn'd *his* face
an' he went.

XVI.

And then he sent me a letter, 'I've gotten my work to do;
You wouldn't kiss me, my lass, an' I never loved any but you;
I am sorry for all the quarrel an' sorry for what she wrote,
I ha' six weeks' work in Jersey an' go to-night by the boat.'

XVII.

An' the wind began to rise, an' I thought of him out at sea,
An' I felt I had been to blame; he was always kind to me.
'Wait a little, my lass, I am sure it 'ill all come right'—
An' the boat went down that night—the boat went down that night.

RIZPAH.

17—.

I.

WAILING, wailing, wailing, the wind over land and sea—
And Willy's voice in the wind, 'O mother, come out to me.'
Why should he call me to-night, when he knows that I cannot go?
For the downs are as bright as day, and the full moon stares at the snow.

II.

We should be seen, my dear; they would spy us out of the town.

The loud black nights for us, and the storm rushing
over the down,
When I cannot see my own hand, but am led by the
creak of the chain,
And grovel and grope for my son till I find myself
drenched with the rain.

III.

Anything fallen again? nay—what was there left to
fall?
I have taken them home, I have number'd the bones,
I have hidden them all.
What am I saying? and what are *you?* do you come
as a spy?
Falls? what falls? who knows? As the tree falls so
must it lie.

IV.

Who let her in? how long has she been? you—what
have you heard?

Why did you sit so quiet? you never have spoken a word.

O—to pray with me—yes—a lady—none of their spies—

But the night has crept into my heart, and begun to darken my eyes.

v.

Ah—you, that have lived so soft, what should *you* know of the night,

The blast and the burning shame and the bitter frost and the fright?

I have done it, while you were asleep—you were only made for the day.

I have gather'd my baby together—and now you may go your way.

vi.

Nay—for it's kind of you, Madam, to sit by an old dying wife.

But say nothing hard of my boy, I have only an hour of life.

I kiss'd my boy in the prison, before he went out to die.

'They dared me to do it,' he said, and he never has told me a lie.

I whipt him for robbing an orchard once when he was but a child—

'The farmer dared me to do it,' he said; he was always so wild—

And idle—and couldn't be idle—my Willy—he never could rest.

The King should have made him a soldier, he would have been one of his best.

VII.

But he lived with a lot of wild mates, and they never would let him be good;

They swore that he dare not rob the mail, and he swore that he would;

And he took no life, but he took one purse, and when
all was done
He flung it among his fellows—I'll none of it, said
my son.

VIII.

I came into court to the Judge and the lawyers. I
told them my tale,
God's own truth—but they kill'd him, they kill'd
him for robbing the mail.
They hang'd him in chains for a show—we had always
borne a good name—
To be hang'd for a thief—and then put away—isn't
that enough shame?
Dust to dust—low down—let us hide! but they set
him so high
That all the ships of the world could stare at him,
passing by.
God 'ill pardon the hell-black raven and horrible
fowls of the air,

But not the black heart of the lawyer who kill'd him
and hang'd him there.

IX.

And the jailer forced me away. I had bid him my
last goodbye;
They had fasten'd the door of his cell. 'O mother!'
I heard him cry.
I couldn't get back tho' I tried, he had something
further to say,
And now I never shall know it. The jailer forced
me away.

X.

Then since I couldn't but hear that cry of my boy
that was dead,
They seized me and shut me up: they fasten'd me
down on my bed.
'Mother, O mother!'—he call'd in the dark to me
year after year—

They beat me for that, they beat me—you know that
I couldn't but hear;
And then at the last they found I had grown so stupid
and still
They let me abroad again—but the creatures had
worked their will.

XI.

Flesh of my flesh was gone, but bone of my bone was
left—
I stole them all from the lawyers—and you, will you
call it a theft?—
My baby, the bones that had suck'd me, the bones
that had laughed and had cried—
Theirs? O no! they are mine—not theirs—they had
moved in my side.

XII.

Do you think I was scared by the bones? I kiss'd
'em, I buried 'em all—

I can't dig deep, I am old—in the night by the churchyard wall.

My Willy 'ill rise up whole when the trumpet of judgment 'ill sound,

But I charge you never to say that I laid him in holy ground.

XIII.

They would scratch him up—they would hang him again on the cursed tree.

Sin? O yes—we are sinners, I know—let all that be,

And read me a Bible verse of the Lord's good will toward men—

'Full of compassion and mercy, the Lord'—let me hear it again;

'Full of compassion and mercy—long-suffering.' Yes, O yes!

For the lawyer is born but to murder—the Saviour lives but to bless.

He'll never put on the black cap except for the worst of the worst,

And the first may be last—I have heard it in church
—and the last may be first.

Suffering—O long-suffering—yes, as the Lord must know,

Year after year in the mist and the wind and the shower and the snow.

XIV.

Heard, have you? what? they have told you he never repented his sin.

How do they know it? are *they* his mother? are *you* of his kin?

Heard! have you ever heard, when the storm on the downs began,

The wind that 'ill wail like a child and the sea that 'ill moan like a man?

XV.

Election, Election and Reprobation—it's all very well.

But I go to-night to my boy, and I shall not find him in Hell.

For I cared so much for my boy that the Lord has look'd into my care,

And He means me I'm sure to be happy with Willy, I know not where.

XVI.

And if *he* be lost—but to save *my* soul, that is all your desire:

Do you think that I care for *my* soul if my boy be gone to the fire?

I have been with God in the dark—go, go, you may leave me alone—

You never have borne a child—you are just as hard as a stone.

XVII.

Madam, I beg your pardon! I think that you mean to be kind,

But I cannot hear what you say for my Willy's voice
in the wind—
The snow and the sky so bright—he used but to call
in the dark,
And he calls to me now from the church and not from
the gibbet—for hark!
Nay—you can hear it yourself—it is coming—shaking
the walls—
Willy—the moon's in a cloud——Good-night. I am
going. He calls.

THE NORTHERN COBBLER.

I.

WAÄIT till our Sally cooms in, fur thou mun a' sights[1] to tell.
Eh, but I be maäin glad to seeä tha sa 'arty an' well.
'Cast awaäy on a disolut land wi' a vartical soon[2]!'
Strange fur to goä fur to think what saäilors a' seëan an' a' doon;
'Summat to drink—sa' 'ot?' I 'a nowt but Adam's wine:
What's the 'eät o' this little 'ill-side to the 'eät o' the line?

[1] The vowels *aï*, pronounced separately though in the closest conjunction, best render the sound of the long *i* and *y* in this dialect. But since such words as *craïin'*, *daïin'*, *whaï*, *aï* (I), etc., look awkward except in a page of express phonetics, I have thought it better to leave the simple *i* and *y*, and to trust that my readers will give them the broader pronunciation.

[2] The *oo* short, as in 'wood.'

II.

'What's i' tha bottle a-stanning theer?' I'll tell tha. Gin.

But if thou wants thy grog, tha mun goä fur it down to the inn.

Naay—fur I be maäin-glad, but thaw tha was iver sa dry,

Thou gits naw gin fro' the bottle theer, an' I'll tell tha why.

III.

Meä an' thy sister was married, when wur it? back-end o' June,

Ten year sin', and wa 'greed as well as a fiddle i' tune:

I could fettle and clump owd booöts and shoes wi' the best on 'em all,

As fer as fro' Thursby thurn hup to Harmsby and Hutterby Hall.

We was busy as beeäs i' the bloom an' as 'appy as
'art could think,
An' then the babby wur burn, and then I taäkes to
the drink.

IV.

An' I weänt gaäinsaäy it, my lad, thaw I be hafe
shaämed on it now,
We could sing a good song at the Plow, we could sing
a good song at the Plow;
Thaw once of a frosty night I slither'd an' hurted my
huck,[1]
An' I coom'd neck-an-crop soomtimes slaäpe down i'
the squad an' the muck:
An' once I fowt wi' the Taäilor—not hafe ov a man,
my lad—
Fur he scrawm'd an' scratted my faäce like a cat, an'
it maäde 'er sa mad
That Sally she turn'd a tongue-banger,[2] an' raäted
ma, 'Sottin' thy braäins

[1] Hip. [2] Scold.

Guzzlin' an' soäkin' an' smoäkin' an' hawmin' [1] about i' the laänes,

Soä sow-droonk that tha doesn not touch thy 'at to the Squire;'

An' I looök'd cock-eyed at my noäse an' I seeäd 'im a-gittin' o' fire;

But sin' I wur hallus i' liquor an' hallus as droonk as a king,

Foälks' coostom flitted awaäy like a kite wi' a brok-ken string.

v.

An' Sally she wesh'd foälks' cloäths to keep the wolf fro' the door,

Eh but the moor she riled me, she druv me to drink the moor,

Fur I fun', when 'er back wur turn'd, wheer Sally's owd stockin' wur 'id,

An' I grabb'd the munny she maäde, and I weär'd it o' liquor, I did.

[1] Lounging.

VI.

An' one night I cooms 'oäm like a bull gotten loose
at a faäir,
An' she wur a-waäitin' fo'mma, an' cryin' and teärin'
'er 'aäir,
An' I tummled athurt the craädle an' sweär'd as I'd
breäk ivry stick
O' furnitur 'ere i' the 'ouse, an' I gied our Sally a
kick,
An' I mash'd the taäbles an' chairs, an' she an' the
babby beäl'd,[1]
Fur I knaw'd naw moor what I did nor a mortal beäst
o' the feäld.

VII.

An' when I waäked i' the murnin' I seeäd that our
Sally went laämed
Cos' o' the kick as I gied 'er, an' I wur dreädful
ashaämed;

[1] Bellowed, cried out.

An' Sally wur sloomy[1] an' draggle taäil'd in an owd turn gown,

An' the babby's faäce wurn't wesh'd an' the 'ole 'ouse hupside down.

VIII.

An' then I minded our Sally sa pratty an' neät an' sweeät,

Straät as a pole an' cleän as a flower fro' 'eäd to feeät:

An' then I minded the fust kiss I gied 'er by Thursby thurn;

Theer wur a lark a-singin' 'is best of a Sunday at murn,

Couldn't see 'im, we 'eärd 'im a-mountin' oop 'igher an' 'igher,

An' then 'e turn'd to the sun, an' 'e shined like a sparkle o' fire.

'Doesn't tha see 'im,' she axes, 'fur I can see 'im?' an' I

[1] Sluggish, out of spirits.

Seeäd nobbut the smile o' the sun as danced in 'er
pratty blue eye;
An' I says 'I mun gie tha a kiss,' an' Sally says 'Noä,
thou moänt,'
But I gied 'er a kiss, an' then anoother, an' Sally says
'doänt!'

IX.

An' when we coom'd into Meeätin', at fust she wur
all in a tew,
But, arter, we sing'd the 'ymn togither like birds on
a beugh;
An' Muggins 'e preäch'd o' Hell-fire an' the loov o'
God fur men,
An' then upo' coomin' awaäy Sally gied me a kiss ov
'ersen.

X.

Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick like Saätan as fell
Down out o' heaven i' Hell-fire—thaw theer's naw
drinkin' i' Hell;

Meä fur to kick our Sally as kep the wolf fro' the door,
All along o' the drink, fur I loov'd 'er as well as afoor.

XI.

Sa like a greät num-cumpus I blubber'd awaäy o' the bed—
'Weänt niver do it naw moor;' an' Sally looökt up an' she said,
'I'll upowd it[1] tha weänt; thou'rt like the rest o' the men,
Thou'll goä sniffin' about the tap till tha does it ageän.
Theer's thy hennemy, man, an' I knaws, as knaws tha sa well,
That, if tha seeäs 'im an' smells 'im tha'll foller 'im slick into Hell.'

XII.

'Naäy,' says I, 'fur I weänt goä sniffin' about the tap.'
'Weänt tha?' she says, an' mysen I thowt i' mysen 'mayhap.'

[1] I'll uphold it.

'Noä:' an' I started awaäy like a shot, an' down to the Hinn,

An' I browt what tha seeäs stannin' theer, yon big black bottle o' gin.

XIII.

'That caps owt,'[1] says Sally, an' saw she begins to cry,

But I puts it inter 'er 'ands an' I says to 'er, 'Sally,' says I,

'Stan' 'im theer i' the naäme o' the Lord an' the power ov 'is Graäce,

Stan' 'im theer, fur I'll loöök my hennemy straït i' the faäce,

Stan' 'im theer i' the winder, an' let ma looök at 'im then,

'E seeäms naw moor nor watter, an' 'e's the Divil's oän sen.'

XIV.

An' I wur down i' tha mouth, couldn't do naw work an' all,

[1] That's beyond everything.

Nasty an' snaggy an' shaäky, an' poonch'd my 'and
wi' the hawl,
But she wur a power o' coomfut, an' sattled 'ersen o'
my knee,
An' coäxd an' coodled me oop till ageän I feel'd
mysen free.

XV.

An' Sally she tell'd it about, an' foälk stood a-
gawmin' [1] in,
As thaw it wur summat bewitch'd istead of a quart o'
gin;
An' some on 'em said it wur watter—an' I wur chousin'
the wife,
Fur I couldn't 'owd 'ands off gin, wur it nobbut to
saäve my life;
An' blacksmith 'e strips me the thick ov 'is airm, an'
'e shaws it to me,
'Feëal thou this! thou can't graw this upo' watter!'
says he.

[1] Staring vacantly.

An' Doctor 'e calls o' Sunday an' just as candles was lit,
'Thou moänt do it,' he says, 'tha mun breäk 'im off bit by bit.'
'Thou'rt but a Methody-man,' says Parson, and laäys down 'is 'at,
An' 'e points to the bottle o' gin, 'but I respecks tha fur that;'
An' Squire, his oän very sen, walks down fro' the 'All to see,
An' 'e spanks 'is 'and into mine, 'fur I respecks tha,' says 'e;
An' coostom ageän draw'd in like a wind fro' far an' wide,
And browt me the booöts to be cobbled fro' hafe the coontryside.

XVI.

An' theer 'e stans an' theer 'e shall stan to my dying daäy;

I 'a gotten to loov 'im ageän in anoother kind of a waäy,
Proud on 'im, like, my lad, an' I keeäps 'im cleän an' bright,
Loovs 'im, an' roobs 'im, an' doosts 'im, an' puts 'im back i' the light.

XVII.

Wouldn't a pint a' sarved as well as a quart? Naw doubt:
But I liked a bigger feller to fight wi' an' fowt it out.
Fine an' meller 'e mun be by this, if I cared to taäste,
But I moänt, my lad, and I weänt, fur I'd feäl mysen cleän disgraäced.

XVIII.

An' once I said to the Missis, 'My lass, when I cooms to die,
Smash the bottle to smithers, the Divil's in 'im,' said I.

But arter I chaänged my mind, an' if Sally be left aloän,
I'll hev 'im a-buried wi'mma an' taäke 'im afoor the Throän.

XIX.

Coom thou 'eer—yon laädy a-steppin' along the streeät,
Doesn't tha knaw 'er—sa pratty, an' feät, an' neät, an' sweeät?
Look at the cloäths on 'er back, thebbe ammost spick-span-new,
An' Tommy's faäce be as fresh as a codlin wesh'd '' the dew.

XX.

'Ere be our Sally an' Tommy, an' we be a-goin to dine,
Baäcon an' taätes, an' a beslings-puddin'[1] an' Adam's wine;

[1] A pudding made with the first milk of the cow after calving.

But if tha wants ony grog tha mun goä fur it down to
the Hinn,
Fur I weänt shed a drop on 'is blood, noä, not fur
Sally's oän kin.

THE REVENGE.

A BALLAD OF THE FLEET.

I.

AT FLORES in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnace, like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far away:
'Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty-three!'
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard: ''Fore God I am no coward;
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow quick.
We are six ships of the line; can we fight with fifty-three?'

II.

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville: 'I know you are
no coward;
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again.
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick
ashore.
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my
Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain.'

III.

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that
day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer
heaven;
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from
the land
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,

And we laid them on the ballast down below;
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain,
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord.

IV.

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea-castles heaving upon the weather bow.
'Shall we fight or shall we fly?
Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
For to fight is but to die!
There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set.'
And Sir Richard said again: 'We be all good English men.

Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,

For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet.'

v.

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hurrah, and so

The little Revenge ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,

With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below;

For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,

And the little Revenge ran on thro' the long sea-lane between.

VI.

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and laugh'd,

Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft

Running on and on, till delay'd
By their mountain-like San Philip that, of fifteen hundred tons,
And up-shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,
Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd.

VII.

And while now the great San Philip hung above us like a cloud
Whence the thunderbolt will fall
Long and loud,
Four galleons drew away
From the Spanish fleet that day,
And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
And the battle-thunder broke from them all.

VIII.

But anon the great San Philip, she bethought herself and went

Having that within her womb that had left her ill content;

And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to hand,

For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,

And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears

When he leaps from the water to the land.

IX.

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the summer sea,

But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three.

Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons came,

Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle-thunder and flame;

Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead and her shame.

For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so
could fight us no more—
God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the
world before?

x.

For he said 'Fight on! fight on!'
Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck;
And it chanced that, when half of the short summer
night was gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly
dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and
the head,
And he said 'Fight on! fight on!'

xi.

And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far
over the summer sea,

And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us
all in a ring;
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that
we still could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be.
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate
strife;
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them
stark and cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder
was all of it spent;
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the
side;
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
'We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!

And a day less or more
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!'

XII.

And the gunner said 'Ay, ay,' but the seamen made reply:
'We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives.
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go;
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow.'
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe.

XIII.

And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,

Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace;
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried:
'I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true;
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do:
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!'
And he fell upon their decks, and he died.

XIV.

And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true,
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap
That he dared her with one little ship and his English few;
Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,

But they sank his body with honour down into the deep,

And they mann'd the Revenge with a swarthier alien crew,

And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own;

When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,

And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,

And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,

And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew,

Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and their flags,

And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot-shatter'd navy of Spain,

And the little Revenge herself went down by the island crags

To be lost evermore in the main.

THE SISTERS.

THEY have left the doors ajar; and by their clash,
And prelude on the keys, I know the song,
Their favourite—which I call 'The Tables Turned.'
Evelyn begins it 'O diviner Air.'

EVELYN.

O diviner Air,
Thro' the heat, the drowth, the dust, the glare,
Far from out the west in shadowing showers,
Over all the meadow baked and bare,
Making fresh and fair
All the bowers and the flowers,
Fainting flowers, faded bowers,
Over all this weary world of ours,
Breathe, diviner Air!

A sweet voice that—you scarce could better that.
Now follows Edith echoing Evelyn.

EDITH.

O diviner light,
Thro' the cloud that roofs our noon with night,
Thro' the blotting mist, the blinding showers,
Far from out a sky for ever bright,
Over all the woodland's flooded bowers,
Over all the meadow's drowning flowers,
Over all this ruin'd world of ours,
Break, diviner light!

Marvellously like, their voices—and themselves!
Tho' one is somewhat deeper than the other,
As one is somewhat graver than the other—
Edith than Evelyn. Your good Uncle, whom
You count the father of your fortune, longs
For this alliance: let me ask you then,
Which voice most takes you? for I do not doubt
Being a watchful parent, you are taken

With one or other: tho' sometimes I fear
You may be flickering, fluttering in a doubt
Between the two—which must not be—which might
Be death to one: they both are beautiful:
Evelyn is gayer, wittier, prettier, says
The common voice, if one may trust it: she?
No! but the paler and the graver, Edith.
Woo her and gain her then: no wavering; boy!
The graver is perhaps the one for you
Who jest and laugh so easily and so well.
For love will go by contrast, as by likes.

No sisters ever prized each other more.
Not so: their mother and her sister loved
More passionately still.
But that my best
And oldest friend, your Uncle, wishes it,
And that I know you worthy everyway
To be my son, I might, perchance, be loath
To part them, or part from them: and yet one
Should marry, or all the broad lands in your view

From this bay window—which our house has held
Three hundred years—will pass collaterally.

My father with a child on either knee,
A hand upon the head of either child,
Smoothing their locks, as golden as his own
Were silver, 'get them wedded' would he say.
And once my prattling Edith ask'd him 'why?'
Ay, why? said he, 'for why should I go lame?'
Then told them of his wars, and of his wound.
For see—this wine—the grape from whence it flow'd
Was blackening on the slopes of Portugal,
When that brave soldier, down the terrible ridge
Plunged in the last fierce charge at Waterloo,
And caught the laming bullet. He left me this,
Which yet retains a memory of its youth,
As I of mine, and my first passion. Come!
Here's to your happy union with my child!

Yet must you change your name: no fault of mine!
You say that you can do it as willingly
As birds make ready for their bridal-time

By change of feather: for all that, my boy,
Some birds are sick and sullen when they moult.
An old and worthy name! but mine that stirr'd
Among our civil wars and earlier too
Among the Roses, the more venerable.
I care not for a name—no fault of mine.
Once more—a happier marriage than my own!

You see yon Lombard poplar on the plain.
The highway running by it leaves a breadth
Of sward to left and right, where, long ago,
One bright May morning in a world of song,
I lay at leisure, watching overhead
The aërial poplar wave, an amber spire.

I dozed; I woke. An open landaulet
Whirl'd by, which, after it had past me, show'd
Turning my way, the loveliest face on earth.
The face of one there sitting opposite,
On whom I brought a strange unhappiness,
That time I did not see.

Love at first sight
May seem—with goodly rhyme and reason for it—
Possible—at first glimpse, and for a face
Gone in a moment—strange. Yet once, when first
I came on lake Llanberris in the dark,
A moonless night with storm—one lightning-fork
Flash'd out the lake; and tho' I loiter'd there
The full day after, yet in retrospect
That less than momentary thunder-sketch
Of lake and mountain conquers all the day.

The Sun himself has limn'd the face for me.
Not quite so quickly, no, nor half as well.
For look you here—the shadows are too deep,
And like the critic's blurring comment make
The veriest beauties of the work appear
The darkest faults: the sweet eyes frown: the lips
Seem but a gash. My sole memorial
Of Edith—no, the other,—both indeed.

So that bright face was flash'd thro' sense and soul
And by the poplar vanish'd—to be found

Long after, as it seem'd, beneath the tall
Tree-bowers, and those long-sweeping beechen boughs
Of our New Forest. I was there alone:
The phantom of the whirling landaulet
For ever past me by: when one quick peal
Of laughter drew me thro' the glimmering glades
Down to the snowlike sparkle of a cloth
On fern and foxglove. Lo, the face again,
My Rosalind in this Arden—Edith—all
One bloom of youth, health, beauty, happiness,
And moved to merriment at a passing jest.

There one of those about her knowing me
Call'd me to join them; so with these I spent
What seem'd my crowning hour, my day of days.

I woo'd her then, nor unsuccessfully,
The worse for her, for me! was I content?
Ay—no, not quite; for now and then I thought
Laziness, vague love-longings, the bright May,
Had made a heated haze to magnify

The charm of Edith—that a man's ideal
Is high in Heaven, and lodged with Plato's God,
Not findable here—content, and not content,
In some such fashion as a man may be
That having had the portrait of his friend
Drawn by an artist, looks at it, and says,
'Good! very like! not altogether he.'

As yet I had not bound myself by words,
Only, believing I loved Edith, made
Edith love *me*. Then came the day when I,
Flattering myself that all my doubts were fools
Born of the fool this Age that doubts of all—
Not I that day of Edith's love or mine—
Had braced my purpose to declare myself:
I stood upon the stairs of Paradise.
The golden gates would open at a word.
I spoke it—told her of my passion, seen
And lost and found again, had got so far,
Had caught her hand, her eyelids fell—I heard
Wheels, and a noise of welcome at the doors—

On a sudden after two Italian years
Had set the blossom of her health again,
The younger sister, Evelyn, enter'd—there,
There was the face, and altogether she.
The mother fell about the daughter's neck,
The sisters closed in one another's arms,
Their people throng'd about them from the hall,
And in the thick of question and reply
I fled the house, driven by one angel face,
And all the Furies.

I was bound to her;
I could not free myself in honour—bound
Not by the sounded letter of the word,
But counterpressures of the yielded hand
That timorously and faintly echoed mine,
Quick blushes, the sweet dwelling of her eyes
Upon me when she thought I did not see—
Were these not bonds? nay, nay, but could I wed her
Loving the other? do her that great wrong?
Had I not dream'd I loved her yestermorn?

Had I not known where Love, at first a fear,
Grew after marriage to full height and form?
Yet after marriage, that mock-sister there—
Brother-in-law—the fiery nearness of it—
Unlawful and disloyal brotherhood—
What end but darkness could ensue from this
For all the three? So Love and Honour jarr'd
Tho' Love and Honour join'd to raise the full
High-tide of doubt that sway'd me up and down
Advancing nor retreating.

Edith wrote:

'My mother bids me ask' (I did not tell you—
A widow with less guile than many a child.
God help the wrinkled children that are Christ's
As well as the plump cheek—she wrought us harm,
Poor soul, not knowing) 'are you ill?' (so ran
The letter) 'you have not been here of late.
You will not find me here. At last I go
On that long-promised visit to the North.
I told your wayside story to my mother

And Evelyn. She remembers you. Farewell.
Pray come and see my mother. Almost blind
With ever-growing cataract, yet she thinks
She sees you when she hears. Again farewell.'

Cold words from one I had hoped to warm so far
That I could stamp my image on her heart!
'Pray come and see my mother, and farewell.'
Cold, but as welcome as free airs of heaven
After a dungeon's closeness. Selfish, strange!
What dwarfs are men! my strangled vanity
Utter'd a stifled cry—to have vext myself
And all in vain for her—cold heart or none—
No bride for me. Yet so my path was clear
To win the sister.

Whom I woo'd and won.

For Evelyn knew not of my former suit,
Because the simple mother work'd upon
By Edith pray'd me not to whisper of it.
And Edith would be bridesmaid on the day.

But on that day, not being all at ease,

I from the altar glancing back upon her,
Before the first 'I will' was utter'd, saw
The bridesmaid pale, statuelike, passionless—
'No harm, no harm' I turn'd again, and placed
My ring upon the finger of my bride.

So, when we parted, Edith spoke no word,
She wept no tear, but round my Evelyn clung
In utter silence for so long, I thought
'What, will she never set her sister free?'

We left her, happy each in each, and then,
As tho' the happiness of each in each
Were not enough, must fain have torrents, lakes,
Hills, the great things of Nature and the fair,
To lift us as it were from commonplace,
And help us to our joy. Better have sent
Our Edith thro' the glories of the earth,
To change with her horizon, if true Love
Were not his own imperial all-in-all.

Far off we went. My God, I would not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world
Is our misshaping vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains.

For on the dark night of our marriage-day
The great Tragedian, that had quench'd herself
In that assumption of the bridesmaid—she
That loved me—our true Edith—her brain broke
With over-acting, till she rose and fled
Beneath a pitiless rush of Autumn rain
To the deaf church—to be let in—to pray
Before *that* altar—so I think; and there
They found her beating the hard Protestant doors.
She died and she was buried ere we knew.

I learnt it first. I had to speak. At once
The bright quick smile of Evelyn, that had sunn'd
The morning of our marriage, past away:
And on our home-return the daily want
Of Edith in the house, the garden, still

Haunted us like her ghost; and by and by,
Either from that necessity for talk
Which lives with blindness, or plain innocence
Of nature, or desire that her lost child
Should earn from both the praise of heroism,
The mother broke her promise to the dead,
And told the living daughter with what love
Edith had welcomed my brief wooing of her,
And all her sweet self-sacrifice and death.

Henceforth that mystic bond betwixt the twins—
Did I not tell you they were twins?—prevail'd
So far that no caress could win my wife
Back to that passionate answer of full heart
I had from her at first. Not that her love,
Tho' scarce as great as Edith's power of love,
Had lessen'd, but the mother's garrulous wail
For ever woke the unhappy Past again,
Till that dead bridesmaid, meant to be my bride,
Put forth cold hands between us, and I fear'd
The very fountains of her life were chill'd;

So took her thence, and brought her here, and here
She bore a child, whom reverently we call'd
Edith; and in the second year was born
A second—this I named from her own self,
Evelyn; then two weeks—no more—she join'd,
In and beyond the grave, that one she loved.
Now in this quiet of declining life,
Thro' dreams by night and trances of the day,
The sisters glide about me hand in hand,
Both beautiful alike, nor can I tell
One from the other, no, nor care to tell
One from the other, only know they come,
They smile upon me, till, remembering all
The love they both have borne me, and the love
I bore them both—divided as I am
From either by the stillness of the grave—
I know not which of these I love the best.

But *you* love Edith; and her own true eyes
Are traitors to her; our quick Evelyn—
The merrier, prettier, wittier, as they talk,

And not without good reason, my good son—
Is yet untouch'd: and I that hold them both
Dearest of all things—well, I am not sure—
But if there lie a preference eitherway,
And in the rich vocabulary of Love
'Most dearest' be a true superlative—
I think *I* likewise love your Edith most.

THE VILLAGE WIFE; OR, THE ENTAIL.[1]

I.

'OUSE-KEEPER sent tha my lass, fur New Squire coom'd
last night.
Butter an' heggs—yis—yis. I'll goä wi' tha back:
all right;
Butter I warrants be prime, an' I warrants the heggs
be as well,
Hafe a pint o' milk runs out when ya breäks the shell.

II.

Sit thysen down fur a bit: hev a glass o' cowslip
wine!
I liked the owd Squire an' 'is gells as thaw they was
gells o' mine,

[1] See note to 'Northern Cobbler.'

Fur then we was all es one, the Squire an' 'is darters an' me,
Hall but Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver not took to she:
But Nelly, the last of the cletch,[1] I liked 'er the fust on 'em all,
Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es died o' the fever at fall:
An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord, but Miss Annie she said it wur draäins,
Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an' arn'd naw thanks fur 'er paäins.
Eh! thebbe all wi' the Lord my childer, I han't gotten none!
Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, an' owd Squire's gone.

III.

Fur 'staäte be i' taäil, my lass: tha dosn' knaw what that be?

[1] A brood of chickens.

But I knaws the law, I does, for the lawyer ha towd it me.

'When theer's naw 'eäd to a 'Ouse by the fault o' that ere maäle—

The gells they counts fur nowt, and the next un he taäkes the taäil.'

IV.

What be the next un like? can tha tell ony harm on 'im lass?—

Naay sit down—naw 'urry—sa cowd!—hev another glass!

Straänge an' cowd fur the time! we may happen a fall o' snaw—

Not es I cares fur to hear ony harm, but I likes to knaw.

An' I 'oäps es 'e beänt boooklarn'd: but 'e dosn' not coom fro' the shere;

We'd anew o' that wi' the Squire, an' we haätes boooklarnin' ere.

v.

Fur Squire wur a Varsity scholard, an' niver lookt arter the land—
Whoäts or tonups or taätes—'e 'ed hallus a booök i' 'is 'and,
Hallus aloän wi' 'is booöks, thaw nigh upo' seventy year.
An' booöks, what's booöks? thou knaws thebbe naither 'ere nor theer.

vi.

An' the gells, they hedn't naw taäils, an' the lawyer he towd it me
That 'is taäil were soä tied up es he couldn't cut down a tree!
'Drat the trees,' says I, to be sewer I haätes 'em, my lass,
Fur we puts the muck o' the land an' they sucks the muck fro' the grass.

VII.

An' Squire wur hallus a-smilin', an' gied to the tramps goin' by—

An' all o' the wust i' the parish—wi' hoffens a drop in 'is eye.

An' ivry darter o' Squire's hed her awn ridin-erse to 'ersen,

An' they rampaged about wi' their grooms, an' was 'untin' arter the men,

An' hallus a-dallackt[1] an' dizen'd out, an' a-buyin' new cloäthes,

While 'e sit like a greät glimmer-gowk[2] wi' 'is glasses athurt 'is noäse,

An' 'is noäse sa grufted wi' snuff es it couldn't be scroob'd awaäy,

Fur atween 'is readin' an' writin' 'e snifft up a box in a daäy,

An' 'e niver runn'd arter the fox, nor arter the birds wi' 'is gun,

[1] Overdrest in gay colours. Owl.

An' 'e niver not shot one 'are, but 'e leäved it to Charlie 'is son,

An' 'e niver not fish'd 'is awn ponds, but Charlie 'e cotch'd the pike,

For 'e warn't not burn to the land, an' 'e didn't take kind to it like;

But I eärs es 'e'd gie fur a howry[1] owd book thutty pound an' moor,

An' 'e'd wrote an owd book, his awn sen, sa I knaw'd es 'e'd coom to be poor;

An' 'e gied—I be fear'd fur to tell tha 'ow much—fur an owd scratted stoän,

An' 'e digg'd up a loomp i' the land an' 'e got a brown pot an' a boän,

An' 'e bowt owd money, es wouldn't goä, wi' good gowd o' the Queen,

An' 'e bowt little statutes all-naäkt an' which was a shaame to be seen;

But 'e niver looökt ower a bill, nor 'e niver not seed to owt,

[1] Filthy.

An' 'e niver knawd nowt but booöks, an' booöks, as thou knaws, beänt nowt.

VIII.

But owd Squire's laädy es long es she lived she kept 'em all clear,

Thaw es long es she lived I niver hed none of 'er darters 'ere;

But arter she died we was all es one, the childer an' me,

An' sarvints runn'd in an' out, an' offens we hed 'em to tea.

Lawk! 'ow I laugh'd when the lasses 'ud talk o' their Missis's waäys,

An' the Missisis talk'd o' the lasses.—I'll tell tha some o' these daäys.

Hoänly Miss Annie were saw stuck oop, like 'er mother afoor—

'Er an' 'er blessed darter—they niver derken'd my door.

IX.

An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled till 'e'd gotten a fright at last,
An' 'e calls fur 'is son, fur the 'turney's letters they foller'd sa fast;
But Squire wur afear'd o' 'is son, an' 'e says to 'im, meek as a mouse,
'Lad, thou mun cut off thy taäil, or the gells 'ull goä to the 'Ouse,
Fur I finds es I be that i' debt, es I 'oäps es thou'll 'elp me a bit,
An' if thou'll 'gree to cut off thy taäil I may saäve mysen yit.'

X.

But Charlie 'e sets back 'is ears, an' 'e sweärs, an' 'e says to 'im 'Noa.
I've gotten the 'staäte by the taäil an' be dang'd if I iver let goa!

Coom! coom! feyther,' 'e says, 'why shouldn't thy booöks be sowd?

I hears es soom o' thy booöks mebbe worth their weight i' gowd.'

XI.

Heäps an' heäps o' booöks, I ha' see'd 'em, belong'd to the Squire,

But the lasses 'ed teärd out leäves i' the middle to kindle the fire;

Sa moäst on 'is owd big booöks fetch'd nigh to nowt at the saäle,

And Squire were at Charlie ageän to git 'im to cut off 'is taäil.

XII.

Ya wouldn't find Charlie's likes—'e were that outdacious at 'oäm,

Not thaw ya went fur to raäke out Hell wi' a small-tooth coämb—

Droonk wi' the Quoloty's wine, an' droonk wi' the farmer's aäle,
Mad wi' the lasses an' all—an' 'e wouldn't cut off the taäil.

XIII.

Thou's coom'd oop by the beck; and a thurn be a-grawin' theer,
I niver ha seed it sa white wi' the Maäy es I see'd it to-year—
Theerabouts Charlie joompt—and it gied me a scare tother night,
Fur I thowt it wur Charlie's ghoäst i' the derk, fur it looökt sa white.
'Billy,' says 'e, 'hev a joomp!'—thaw the banks o' the beck be sa high,
Fur he ca'd 'is 'erse Billy-rough-un, thaw niver a hair wur awry;
But Billy fell bakkuds o' Charlie, an' Charlie 'e brok 'is neck,

Sa theer wur a hend o' the taäil, fur 'e lost 'is taäil i' the beck.

XIV.

Sa 'is taäil wur lost an' 'is booöks wur gone an' 'is boy wur deäd,
An' Squire 'e smiled an' 'e smiled, but 'e niver not lift oop 'is 'eäd:
Hallus a soft un Squire! an' 'e smiled, fur 'e hedn't naw friend,
Sa feyther an' son was buried togither, an' this wur the hend.

XV.

An' Parson as hesn't the call, nor the mooney, but hes the pride,
'E reäds of a sewer an' sartan 'oäp o' the tother side;
But I beänt that sewer es the Lord, howsiver they praäy'd, an' praäy'd,
Lets them inter 'eaven eäsy es leäves their debts to be paäid.

Siver the mou'ds rattled down upo' poor owd Squire
i' the wood,
An' I cried along wi' the gells, fur they weänt niver
coom to naw good.

XVI.

Fur Molly the long un she walkt awaäy wi' a hofficer
lad,
An' nawbody 'eärd on 'er sin, sa o' coorse she be gone
to the bad!
An' Lucy wur laäme o' one leg, sweet'arts she niver
'ed none—
Straänge an' unheppen[1] Miss Lucy! we naämed her
'Dot an' gaw one!'
An' Hetty wur weak i' the hattics, wi'out ony harm i'
the legs,
An' the fever 'ed baäked Jinny's 'eäd as bald as one
o' them heggs,
An' Nelly wur up fro' the craädle as big i' the mouth
as a cow,

[1] Ungainly, awkward.

An' saw she mun hammergrate,[1] lass, or she weänt git
a maäte onyhow!
An' es for Miss Annie es call'd me afoor my awn
foälks to my faäce
'A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be larn'd her
awn plaäce,'
Hes fur Miss Hannie the heldest hes now be a-grawin'
sa howd,
I knaws that mooch o' sheä, es it beänt not fit to be
towd!

XVII.

Sa I didn't not taäke it kindly ov owd Miss Annie to
saäy
Es I should be talkin ageän 'em, es soon es they went
awaäy,
Fur, lawks! 'ow I cried when they went, an' our
Nelly she gied me 'er 'and,
Fur I'd ha done owt for the Squire an' 'is gells es be-
long'd to the land;

[1] Emigrate.

Booöks, es I said afoor, thebbe neyther 'ere nor theer!
But I sarved 'em wi' butter an' heggs fur huppuds o'
twenty year.

XVIII.

An' they hallus paäid what I hax'd, sa I hallus deal'd
wi' the Hall,
An' they knaw'd what butter wur, an' they knaw'd
what a hegg wur an' all;
Hugger-mugger they lived, but they wasn't that eäsy
to pleäse,
Till I gied 'em Hinjian curn, an' they laäid big heggs
es tha seeas;
An' I niver puts saäme[1] i' *my* butter, they does it at
Willis's farm,
Taäste another drop o' the wine—tweänt do tha naw
harm.

XIX.

Sa new Squire's coom'd wi' 'is taäil in 'is 'and, an'
owd Squire's gone;

[1] Lard.

I heard 'im a roomlin' by, but arter my nightcap wur on;

Sa I han't clapt eyes on 'im yit, fur he coom'd last night sa laäte—

Pluksh! ! ![1] the hens i' the peäs! why didn't tha hesp the gaäte?

[1] A cry accompanied by a clapping of hands to scare trespassing fowl.

IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL.

EMMIE.

I.

Our doctor had call'd in another, I never had seen
him before,
But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him come
in at the door,
Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and of other
lands—
Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merciless
hands!
Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they said
too of him
He was happier using the knife than in trying to save
the limb,

And that I can well believe, for he look'd so coarse
and so red,
I could think he was one of those who would break
their jests on the dead,
And mangle the living dog that had loved him and
fawn'd at his knee—
Drench'd with the hellish oorali—that ever such
things should be!

II.

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of our children
would die
But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and the
comforting eye—
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd out
of its place—
Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was all but a hope-
less case:
And he handled him gently enough; but his voice
and his face were not kind,

And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it and made up his mind,

And he said to me roughly 'The lad will need little more of your care.'

'All the more need,' I told him, 'to seek the Lord Jesus in prayer;

They are all his children here, and I pray for them all as my own:'

But he turn'd to me, 'Ay, good woman, can prayer set a broken bone?'

Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know that I heard him say

'All very well—but the good Lord Jesus has had his day.'

III.

Had? has it come? It has only dawn'd. It will come by and by.

O how could I serve in the wards if the hope of the world were a lie?

How could I bear with the sights and the loathsome
smells of disease
But that He said 'Ye do it to me, when ye do it to
these'?

IV.

So he went. And we past to this ward where the
younger children are laid:
Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our meek
little maid;
Empty you see just now! We have lost her who loved
her so much—
Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive plant to
the touch;
Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved me to
tears,
Hers was the gratefullest heart I have found in a child
of her years—
Nay you remember our Emmie; you used to send her
the flowers;

How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em, talk to 'em hours after hours!

They that can wander at will where the works of the Lord are reveal'd

Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip out of the field;

Flowers to these 'spirits in prison' are all they can know of the spring,

They freshen and sweeten the wards like the waft of an Angel's wing;

And she lay with a flower in one hand and her thin hands crost on her breast—

Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we thought her at rest,

Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said 'Poor little dear,

Nurse, I must do it to-morrow; she'll never live thro' it, I fear.'

v.

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as the head
of the stair,
Then I return'd to the ward; the child didn't see I
was there.

VI.

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved and
so vext!
Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd from her
cot to the next,
'He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie, what
shall I do?'
Annie consider'd. 'If I,' said the wise little Annie,
'was you,
I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me, for,
Emmie, you see,
It's all in the picture there: "Little children should
come to me."'
(Meaning the print that you gave us, I find that it
always can please

Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children about his knees.)

'Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, 'but then if I call to the Lord,

How should he know that it's me? such a lot of beds in the ward!'

That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she consider'd and said:

'Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave 'em outside on the bed—

The Lord has so *much* to see to! but, Emmie, you tell it him plain,

It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the counterpane.'

VII.

I had sat three nights by the child—I could not watch her for four—

My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could do it no more.

That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that it never would pass.

There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of hail on the glass,

And there was a phantom cry that I heard as I tost about,

The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm and the darkness without;

My sleep was broken besides with dreams of the dreadful knife

And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce would escape with her life;

Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she stood by me and smiled,

And the doctor came at his hour, and we went to see to the child.

VIII.

He had brought his ghastly tools: we believed her asleep again—

Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the
counterpane;
Say that His day is done! Ah why should we care
what they say?
The Lord of the children had heard her, and Emmie
had past away.

DEDICATORY POEM TO THE PRINCESS ALICE.

DEAD PRINCESS, living Power, if that, which lived
True life, live on—and if the fatal kiss,
Born of true life and love, divorce thee not
From earthly love and life—if what we call
The spirit flash not all at once from out
This shadow into Substance—then perhaps
The mellow'd murmur of the people's praise
From thine own State, and all our breadth of realm,
Where Love and Longing dress thy deeds in light,
Ascends to thee; and this March morn that sees
Thy Soldier-brother's bridal orange-bloom
Break thro' the yews and cypress of thy grave,
And thine Imperial mother smile again,
May send one ray to thee! and who can tell—

Thou—England's England-loving daughter—thou
Dying so English thou wouldst have her flag
Borne on thy coffin—where is he can swear
But that some broken gleam from our poor earth
May touch thee, while remembering thee, I lay
At thy pale feet this ballad of the deeds
Of England, and her banner in the East?

THE DEFENCE OF LUCKNOW.

I.

BANNER of England, not for a season, O banner of Britain, hast thou
Floated in conquering battle or flapt to the battle-cry!
Never with mightier glory than when we had rear'd thee on high
Flying at top of the roofs in the ghastly siege of Lucknow—
Shot thro' the staff or the halyard, but ever we raised thee anew,
And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

II.

Frail were the works that defended the hold that we held with our lives—

Women and children among us, God help them, our children and wives!

Hold it we might—and for fifteen days or for twenty at most.

'Never surrender, I charge you, but every man die at his post!'

Voice of the dead whom we loved, our Lawrence the best of the brave:

Cold were his brows when we kiss'd him—we laid him that night in his grave.

'Every man die at his post!' and there hail'd on our houses and halls

Death from their rifle-bullets, and death from their cannon-balls,

Death in our innermost chamber, and death at our slight barricade,

Death while we stood with the musket, and death while we stoopt to the spade,

Death to the dying, and wounds to the wounded, for often there fell,

Striking the hospital wall, crashing thro' it, their shot and their shell,

Death—for their spies were among us, their marksmen were told of our best,

So that the brute bullet broke thro' the brain that could think for the rest;

Bullets would sing by our foreheads, and bullets would rain at our feet—

Fire from ten thousand at once of the rebels that girdled us round—

Death at the glimpse of a finger from over the breadth of a street,

Death from the heights of the mosque and the palace, and death in the ground!

Mine? yes, a mine! Countermine! down, down! and creep thro' the hole!

Keep the revolver in hand! you can hear him—the murderous mole!

Quiet, ah! quiet—wait till the point of the pickaxe be thro'!

Click with the pick, coming nearer and nearer again than before—

Now let it speak, and you fire, and the dark pioneer is no more;

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew!

III.

Ay, but the foe sprung his mine many times, and it chanced on a day

Soon as the blast of that underground thunderclap echo'd away,

Dark thro' the smoke and the sulphur like so many fiends in their hell—

Cannon-shot, musket-shot, volley on volley, and yell upon yell—

Fiercely on all the defences our myriad enemy fell.

What have they done? where is it? Out yonder.
Guard the Redan!

Storm at the Water-gate! storm at the Bailey-gate!
storm, and it ran

Surging and swaying all round us, as ocean on every
side

Plunges and heaves at a bank that is daily devour'd
by the tide—

So many thousands that if they be bold enough, who
shall escape?

Kill or be kill'd, live or die, they shall know we are
soldiers and men!

Ready! take aim at their leaders—their masses are
gapp'd with our grape—

Backward they reel like the wave, like the wave fling-
ing forward again,

Flying and foil'd at the last by the handful they could
not subdue;

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of Eng-
land blew.

IV.

Handful of men as we were, we were English in heart and in limb,
Strong with the strength of the race to command, to obey, to endure,
Each of us fought as if hope for the garrison hung but on him;
Still—could we watch at all points? we were every day fewer and fewer.
There was a whisper among us, but only a whisper that past:
'Children and wives—if the tigers leap into the fold unawares—
Every man die at his post—and the foe may outlive us at last—
Better to fall by the hands that they love, than to fall into theirs!'
Roar upon roar in a moment two mines by the enemy sprung

Clove into perilous chasms our walls and our poor palisades.

Rifleman, true is your heart, but be sure that your hand be as true!

Sharp is the fire of assault, better aimed are your flank fusillades—

Twice do we hurl them to earth from the ladders to which they had clung,

Twice from the ditch where they shelter we drive them with hand-grenades;

And ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew.

v.

Then on another wild morning another wild earthquake out-tore

Clean from our lines of defence ten or twelve good paces or more.

Rifleman, high on the roof, hidden there from the light of the sun—

One has leapt up on the breach, crying out: 'Follow me, follow me!'—

Mark him—he falls! then another, and *him* too, and down goes he.

Had they been bold enough then, who can tell but the traitors had won?

Boardings and rafters and doors—an embrasure! make way for the gun!

Now double-charge it with grape! It is charged and we fire, and they run.

Praise to our Indian brothers, and let the dark face have his due!

Thanks to the kindly dark faces who fought with us, faithful and few,

Fought with the bravest among us, and drove them, and smote them, and slew,

That ever upon the topmost roof our banner in India blew.

VI.

Men will forget what we suffer and not what we do. We can fight!

But to be soldier all day and be sentinel all thro' the night—

Ever the mine and assault, our sallies, their lying alarms,

Bugles and drums in the darkness, and shoutings and soundings to arms,

Ever the labour of fifty that had to be done by five,

Ever the marvel among us that one should be left alive,

Ever the day with its traitorous death from the loop-holes around,

Ever the night with its coffinless corpse to be laid in the ground,

Heat like the mouth of a hell, or a deluge of cataract skies,

Stench of old offal decaying, and infinite torment of flies,

Thoughts of the breezes of May blowing over an English field,

Cholera, scurvy, and fever, the wound that *would* not be heal'd,

Lopping away of the limb by the pitiful-pitiless knife,—

Torture and trouble in vain,—for it never could save
us a life.
Valour of delicate women who tended the hospital bed,
Horror of women in travail among the dying and
dead,
Grief for our perishing children, and never a moment
for grief,
Toil and ineffable weariness, faltering hopes of relief,
Havelock baffled, or beaten, or butcher'd for all that
we knew—
Then day and night, day and night, coming down on
the still-shatter'd walls
Millions of musket-bullets, and thousands of cannon
balls—
But ever upon the topmost roof our banner of Eng-
land blew.

VII.

Hark cannonade, fusillade! is it true what was told
by the scout,

Outram and Havelock breaking their way through the fell mutineers?

Surely the pibroch of Europe is ringing again in our ears!

All on a sudden the garrison utter a jubilant shout,

Havelock's glorious Highlanders answer with conquering cheers,

Sick from the hospital echo them, women and children come out,

Blessing the wholesome white faces of Havelock's good fusileers,

Kissing the war-harden'd hand of the Highlander wet with their tears!

Dance to the pibroch!—saved! we are saved!—is it you? is it you?

Saved by the valour of Havelock, saved by the blessing of Heaven!

'Hold it for fifteen days!' we have held it for eighty-seven!

And ever aloft on the palace roof the old banner of England blew.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, LORD COBHAM.

(IN WALES.)

My friend should meet me somewhere hereabout
To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I have broke their cage, no gilded one, I trow-
I read no more the prisoner's mute wail
Scribbled or carved upon the pitiless stone;
I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or none,
For I am emptier than a friar's brains;
But God is with me in this wilderness,
These wet black passes and foam-churning chasms—
And God's free air, and hope of better things.

I would I knew their speech: not now to glean,
Not now—I hope to do it—some scatter'd ears,

Some ears for Christ in this wild field of Wales—
But, bread, merely for bread. This tongue that wagg'd
They said with such heretical arrogance
Against the proud archbishop Arundel—
So much God's cause was fluent in it—is here
But as a Latin Bible to the crowd;
'Bara!'—what use? The Shepherd, when I speak,
Vailing a sudden eyelid with his hard
'Dim Saesneg' passes, wroth at things of old—
No fault of mine. Had he God's word in Welsh
He might be kindlier: happily come the day!

Not least art thou, thou little Bethlehem
In Judah, for in thee the Lord was born;
Nor thou in Britain, little Lutterworth,
Least, for in thee the word was born again.

Heaven-sweet Evangel, ever-living word,
Who whilome spakest to the South in Greek
About the soft Mediterranean shores,

And then in Latin to the Latin crowd,
As good need was—thou hast come to talk our isle.
Hereafter thou, fulfilling Pentecost,
Must learn to use the tongues of all the world.
Yet art thou thine own witness that thou bringest
Not peace, a sword, a fire.
What did he say,
My frighted Wiclif-preacher whom I crost
In flying hither? that one night a crowd
Throng'd the waste field about the city gates:
The king was on them suddenly with a host.
Why there? they came to hear their preacher. Then
Some cried on Cobham, on the good Lord Cobham;
Ay, for they love me! but the king—nor voice
Nor finger raised against him—took and hang'd,
Took, hang'd and burnt—how many—thirty-nine—
Call'd it rebellion—hang'd, poor friends, as rebels
And burn'd alive as heretics! for your Priest
Labels—to take the king along with him—
All heresy, treason: but to call men traitors
May make men traitors.

Rose of Lancaster,
Red in thy birth, redder with household war,
Now reddest with the blood of holy men,
Redder to be, red rose of Lancaster—
If somewhere in the North, as Rumour sang
Fluttering the hawks of this crown-lusting line—
By firth and loch thy silver sister grow,[1]
That were my rose, there my allegiance due.
Self-starved, they say—nay, murder'd, doubtless dead.
So to this king I cleaved: my friend was he,
Once my fast friend: I would have given my life
To help his own from scathe, a thousand lives
To save his soul. He might have come to learn
Our Wiclif's learning: but the worldly Priests
Who fear the king's hard common-sense should find
What rotten piles uphold their mason-work,
Urge him to foreign war. O had he will'd
I might have stricken a lusty stroke for him,
But he would not; far liever led my friend
Back to the pure and universal church,

[1] Richard II.

But he would not: whether that heirless flaw
In his throne's title make him feel so frail,
He leans on Antichrist; or that his mind,
So quick, so capable in soldiership,
In matters of the faith, alas the while!
More worth than all the kingdoms of this world,
Runs in the rut, a coward to the Priest.

Burnt—good Sir Roger Acton, my dear friend!
Burnt too, my faithful preacher, Beverley!
Lord give thou power to thy two witnesses!
Lest the false faith make merry over them!
Two—nay but thirty-nine have risen and stand,
Dark with the smoke of human sacrifice,
Before thy light, and cry continually—
Cry—against whom?
Him, who should bear the sword
Of Justice—what! the kingly, kindly boy;
Who took the world so easily heretofore,
My boon companion, tavern-fellow—him
Who gibed and japed—in many a merry tale

That shook our sides—at Pardoners, Summoners,
Friars, absolution-sellers, monkeries
And nunneries, when the wild hour and the wine
Had set the wits aflame.

Harry of Monmouth,
Or Amurath of the East?

Better to sink
Thy fleurs-de-lys in slime again, and fling
Thy royalty back into the riotous fits
Of wine and harlotry—thy shame, and mine,
Thy comrade—than to persecute the Lord,
And play the Saul that never will be Paul.

Burnt, burnt! and while this mitred Arundel
Dooms our unlicensed preacher to the flame,
The mitre-sanction'd harlot draws his clerks
Into the suburb—their hard celibacy,
Sworn to be veriest ice of pureness, molten
Into adulterous living, or such crimes
As holy Paul—a shame to speak of them—
Among the heathen—

Sanctuary granted
To bandit, thief, assassin—yea to him
Who hacks his mother's throat—denied to him,
Who finds the Saviour in his mother tongue.
The Gospel, the Priest's pearl, flung down to swine—
The swine, lay-men, lay-women, who will come,
God willing, to outlearn the filthy friar.
Ah rather, Lord, than that thy Gospel, meant
To course and range thro' all the world, should be
Tether'd to these dead pillars of the Church—
Rather than so, if thou wilt have it so,
Burst vein, snap sinew, and crack heart, and life
Pass in the fire of Babylon! but how long,
O Lord, how long!
My friend should meet me here.
Here is the copse, the fountain and—a Cross!
To thee, dead wood, I bow not head nor knees.
Rather to thee, green boscage, work of God,
Black holly, and white-flower'd wayfaring-tree!
Rather to thee, thou living water, drawn
By this good Wiclif mountain down from heaven,

And speaking clearly in thy native tongue—
No Latin—He that thirsteth, come and drink!

Eh! how I anger'd Arundel asking me
To worship Holy Cross! I spread mine arms,
God's work, I said, a cross of flesh and blood
And holier. That was heresy. (My good friend
By this time should be with me.) 'Images?'
'Bury them as God's truer images
Are daily buried.' 'Heresy.—Penance?' 'Fast,
Hairshirt and scourge—nay, let a man repent,
Do penance in his heart, God hears him.' 'Heresy—
Not shriven, not saved?' 'What profits an ill Priest
Between me and my God? I would not spurn
Good counsel of good friends, but shrive myself
No, not to an Apostle.' 'Heresy.'
(My friend is long in coming.) 'Pilgrimages?'
'Drink, bagpipes, revelling, devil's-dances, vice.
The poor man's money gone to fat the friar.
Who reads of begging saints in Scripture?'—
'Heresy'—

(Hath he been here—not found me—gone again?
Have I mislearnt our place of meeting?) 'Bread—
Bread left after the blessing?' how they stared,
That was their main test-question—glared at me!
'He veil'd Himself in flesh, and now He veils
His flesh in bread, body and bread together.'
Then rose the howl of all the cassock'd wolves,
'No bread, no bread. God's body!' Archbishop,
Bishop,
Priors, Canons, Friars, bellringers, Parish-clerks—
'No bread, no bread!'—'Authority of the Church,
Power of the keys!'—Then I, God help me, I
So mock'd, so spurn'd, so baited two whole days—
I lost myself and fell from evenness,
And rail'd at all the Popes, that ever since
Sylvester shed the venom of world-wealth
Into the church, had only prov'n themselves
Poisoners, murderers. Well—God pardon all—
Me, them, and all the world—yea, that proud Priest,
That mock-meek mouth of utter Antichrist,
That traitor to King Richard and the truth,

Who rose and doom'd me to the fire.

Amen!

Nay, I can burn, so that the Lord of life
Be by me in my death.

Those three! the fourth
Was like the Son of God! Not burnt were they.
On *them* the smell of burning had not past.
That was a miracle to convert the king.
These Pharisees, this Caiaphas-Arundel
What miracle could turn? *He* here again,
He thwarting their traditions of Himself,
He would be found a heretic to Himself,
And doom'd to burn alive.

So, caught, I burn.
Burn? heathen men have borne as much as this,
For freedom, or the sake of those they loved,
Or some less cause, some cause far less than mine;
For every other cause is less than mine.
The moth will singe her wings, and singed return,
Her love of light quenching her fear of pain—
How now, my soul, we do not heed the fire?

Faint-hearted? tut!—faint-stomach'd! faint as I am,
God willing, I will burn for Him.
Who comes?
A thousand marks are set upon my head.
Friend?—foe perhaps—a tussle for it then!
Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well disguised,
I knew thee not. Hast thou brought bread with thee?
I have not broken bread for fifty hours.
None? I am damn'd already by the Priest
For holding there was bread where bread was none—
No bread. My friends await me yonder? Yes.
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it far?
Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand.
I am not like to die for lack of bread,
For I must live to testify by fire.[1]

[1] He was burnt on Christmas Day, 1417.

COLUMBUS.

CHAINS, my good lord: in your raised brows I read
Some wonder at our chamber ornaments.
We brought this iron from our isles of gold.

Does the king know you deign to visit him
Whom once he rose from off his throne to greet
Before his people, like his brother king?
I saw your face that morning in the crowd.

At Barcelona—tho' you were not then
So bearded. Yes. The city deck'd herself
To meet me, roar'd my name; the king, the queen
Bad me be seated, speak, and tell them all
The story of my voyage, and while I spoke
The crowd's roar fell as at the 'Peace, be still!'

And when I ceased to speak, the king, the queen,
Sank from their thrones, and melted into tears,
And knelt, and lifted hand and heart and voice
In praise to God who led me thro' the waste.
And then the great 'Laudamus' rose to heaven.

Chains for the Admiral of the Ocean! chains
For him who gave a new heaven, a new earth
As holy John had prophesied of me,
Gave glory and more empire to the kings
Of Spain than all their battles! chains for him
Who push'd his prows into the setting sun,
And made West East, and sail'd the Dragon's mouth,
And came upon the Mountain of the World,
And saw the rivers roll from Paradise!

Chains! we are Admirals of the Ocean, we,
We and our sons for ever. Ferdinand
Hath sign'd it and our Holy Catholic queen—
Of the Ocean—of the Indies—Admirals we—
Our title, which we never mean to yield,

Our guerdon not alone for what we did,
But our amends for all we might have done—
The vast occasion of our stronger life—
Eighteen long years of waste, seven in your Spain,
Lost, showing courts and kings a truth the babe
Will suck in with his milk hereafter—earth
A sphere.

Were *you* at Salamanca? No.
We fronted there the learning of all Spain,
All their cosmogonies, their astronomies:
Guess-work *they* guess'd it, but the golden guess
Is morning-star to the full round of truth.
No guess-work! I was certain of my goal;
Some thought it heresy, but that would not hold.
King David call'd the heavens a hide, a tent
Spread over earth, and so this earth was flat:
Some cited old Lactantius: could it be
That trees grew downward, rain fell upward, men
Walk'd like the fly on ceilings? and besides,
The great Augustine wrote that none could breathe

Within the zone of heat; so might there be
Two Adams, two mankinds, and that was clean
Against God's word: thus was I beaten back,
And chiefly to my sorrow by the Church,
And thought to turn my face from Spain, appeal
Once more to France or England; but our Queen
Recall'd me, for at last their Highnesses
Were half-assured this earth might be a sphere.

All glory to the all-blessed Trinity,
All glory to the mother of our Lord,
And Holy Church, from whom I never swerved
Not even by one hair's-breadth of heresy,
I have accomplish'd what I came to do.

Not yet—not all—last night a dream—I sail'd
On my first voyage, harass'd by the frights
Of my first crew, their curses and their groans.
The great flame-banner borne by Teneriffe,
The compass, like an old friend false at last
In our most need, appall'd them, and the wind

Still westward, and the weedy seas—at length
The landbird, and the branch with berries on it,
The carven staff—and last the light, the light
On Guanahani! but I changed the name;
San Salvador I call'd it; and the light
Grew as I gazed, and brought out a broad sky
Of dawning over—not those alien palms,
The marvel of that fair new nature—not
That Indian isle, but our most ancient East
Moriah with Jerusalem; and I saw
The glory of the Lord flash up, and beat
Thro' all the homely town from jasper, sapphire,
Chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius,
Chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase,
Jacynth, and amethyst—and those twelve gates,
Pearl—and I woke, and thought—death—I shall die—
I am written in the Lamb's own Book of Life
To walk within the glory of the Lord
Sunless and moonless, utter light—but no!
The Lord had sent this bright, strange dream to me
To mind me of the secret vow I made

When Spain was waging war against the Moor—
I strove myself with Spain against the Moor.
There came two voices from the Sepulchre,
Two friars crying that if Spain should oust
The Moslem from her limit, he, the fierce
Soldan of Egypt, would break down and raze
The blessed tomb of Christ; whereon I vow'd
That, if our Princes harken'd to my prayer,
Whatever wealth I brought from that new world
Should, in this old, be consecrate to lead
A new crusade against the Saracen,
And free the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Gold? I had brought your Princes gold enough
If left alone! Being but a Genovese,
I am handled worse than had I been a Moor,
And breach'd the belting wall of Cambalu,
And given the Great Khan's palaces to the Moor,
Or clutch'd the sacred crown of Prester John,
And cast it to the Moor: but *had* I brought
From Solomon's now-recover'd Ophir all

The gold that Solomon's navies carried home,
Would that have gilded *me?* Blue blood of Spain,
Tho' quartering your own royal arms of Spain,
I have not: blue blood and black blood of Spain,
The noble and the convict of Castile,
Howl'd me from Hispaniola; for you know
The flies at home, that ever swarm about
And cloud the highest heads, and murmur down
Truth in the distance—these outbuzz'd me so
That even our prudent king, our righteous queen—
I pray'd them being so calumniated
They would commission one of weight and worth
To judge between my slander'd self and me—
Fonseca my main enemy at their court,
They sent me out *his* tool, Bovadilla, one
As ignorant and impolitic as a beast—
Blockish irreverence, brainless greed—who sack'd
My dwelling, seized upon my papers, loosed
My captives, feed the rebels of the crown,
Sold the crown-farms for all but nothing, gave
All but free leave for all to work the mines,

Drove me and my good brothers home in chains,
And gathering ruthless gold—a single piece
Weigh'd nigh four thousand Castillanos—so
They tell me—weigh'd him down into the abysm—
The hurricane of the latitude on him fell,
The seas of our discovering over-roll
Him and his gold; the frailer caravel,
With what was mine, came happily to the shore.
There was a glimmering of God's hand.

And God
Hath more than glimmer'd on me. O my lord,
I swear to you I heard his voice between
The thunders in the black Veragua nights,
'O soul of little faith, slow to believe!
Have I not been about thee from thy birth?
Given thee the keys of the great Ocean-sea?
Set thee in light till time shall be no more?
Is it I who have deceived thee or the world?
Endure! thou hast done so well for men, that men
Cry out against thee: was it otherwise
With mine own Son?'

And more than once in days
Of doubt and cloud and storm, when drowning hope
Sank all but out of sight, I heard his voice,
'Be not cast down. I lead thee by the hand,
Fear not.' And I shall hear his voice again—
I know that he has led me all my life,
I am not yet too old to work his will—
His voice again.

Still for all that, my lord,
I lying here bedridden and alone,
Cast off, put by, scouted by court and king—
The first discoverer starves—his followers, all
Flower into fortune—our world's way—and I,
Without a roof that I can call mine own,
With scarce a coin to buy a meal withal,
And seeing what a door for scoundrel scum
I open'd to the West, thro' which the lust,
Villany, violence, avarice, of your Spain
Pour'd in on all those happy naked isles—
Their kindly native princes slain or slaved,

Their wives and children Spanish concubines, .
Their innocent hospitalities quench'd in blood,
Some dead of hunger, some beneath the scourge,
Some over-labour'd, some by their own hands,—
Yea, the dear mothers, crazing Nature, kill
Their babies at the breast for hate of Spain—
Ah God, the harmless people whom we found
In Hispaniola's island-Paradise!
Who took us for the very Gods from Heaven,
And we have sent them very fiends from Hell;
And I myself, myself not blameless, I
Could sometimes wish I had never led the way.

Only the ghost of our great Catholic Queen
Smiles on me, saying, 'Be thou comforted!
This creedless people will be brought to Christ
And own the holy governance of Rome.'

But who could dream that we, who bore the Cross
Thither, were excommunicated there,
For curbing crimes that scandalised the Cross,

By him, the Catalonian Minorite,
Rome's Vicar in our Indies? who believe
These hard memorials of our truth to Spain
Clung closer to us for a longer term
Than any friend of ours at Court? and yet
Pardon—too harsh, unjust. I am rack'd with pains.

You see that I have hung them by my bed,
And I will have them buried in my grave.

Sir, in that flight of ages which are God's
Own voice to justify the dead—perchance
Spain once the most chivalric race on earth,
Spain then the mightiest, wealthiest realm on earth,
So made by me, may seek to unbury me,
To lay me in some shrine of this old Spain,
Or in that vaster Spain I leave to Spain.
Then some one standing by my grave will say,
'Behold the bones of Christopher Colòn'—
'Ay, but the chains, what do *they* mean—the chains?'—
I sorrow for that kindly child of Spain

Who then will have to answer, 'These same chains
Bound these same bones back thro' the Atlantic sea,
Which he unchain'd for all the world to come.'

O Queen of Heaven who seest the souls in Hell
And purgatory, I suffer all as much
As they do—for the moment. Stay, my son
Is here anon: my son will speak for me
Ablier than I can in these spasms that grind
Bone against bone. You will not. One last word.

You move about the Court, I pray you tell
King Ferdinand who plays with me, that one,
Whose life has been no play with him and his
Hidalgos—shipwrecks, famines, fevers, fights,
Mutinies, treacheries—wink'd at, and condoned—
That I am loyal to him till the death,
And ready—tho' our Holy Catholic Queen,
Who fain had pledged her jewels on my first voyage,
Whose hope was mine to spread the Catholic faith,
Who wept with me when I return'd in chains,

Who sits beside the blessed Virgin now,
To whom I send my prayer by night and day—
She is gone—but you will tell the King, that I,
Rack'd as I am with gout, and wrench'd with pains
Gain'd in the service of His Highness, yet
Am ready to sail forth on one last voyage,
And readier, if the King would hear, to lead
One last crusade against the Saracen,
And save the Holy Sepulchre from thrall.

Going? I am old and slighted: you have dared
Somewhat perhaps in coming? my poor thanks!
I am but an alien and a Genovese.

THE VOYAGE OF MAELDUNE.

(FOUNDED ON AN IRISH LEGEND. A.D. 700.)

I.

I WAS the chief of the race—he had stricken my father dead—
But I gather'd my fellows together, I swore I would strike off his head.
Each of them look'd like a king, and was noble in birth as in worth,
And each of them boasted he sprang from the oldest race upon earth.
Each was as brave in the fight as the bravest hero of song,
And each of them liefer had died than have done one another a wrong.

He lived on an isle in the ocean—we sail'd on a Friday morn—
He that had slain my father the day before I was born.

II.

And we came to the isle in the ocean, and there on the shore was he.
But a sudden blast blew us out and away thro' a boundless sea.

III.

And we came to the Silent Isle that we never had touch'd at before,
Where a silent ocean always broke on a silent shore,
And the brooks glitter'd on in the light without sound, and the long waterfalls
Pour'd in a thunderless plunge to the base of the mountain walls,
And the poplar and cypress unshaken by storm flourish'd up beyond sight,

And the pine shot aloft from the crag to an unbelievable height,

And high in the heaven above it there flicker'd a songless lark,

And the cock couldn't crow, and the bull couldn't low, and the dog couldn't bark.

And round it we went, and thro' it, but never a murmur, a breath—

It was all of it fair as life, it was all of it quiet as death,

And we hated the beautiful Isle, for whenever we strove to speak

Our voices were thinner and fainter than any flittermouse-shriek;

And the men that were mighty of tongue and could raise such a battle-cry

That a hundred who heard it would rush on a thousand lances and die—

O they to be dumb'd by the charm!—so fluster'd with anger were they

They almost fell on each other; but after we sail'd away.

IV.

And we came to the Isle of Shouting, we landed, a score of wild birds
Cried from the topmost summit with human voices and words;
Once in an hour they cried, and whenever their voices peal'd
The steer fell down at the plow and the harvest died from the field,
And the men dropt dead in the valleys and half of the cattle went lame,
And the roof sank in on the hearth, and the dwelling broke into flame;
And the shouting of these wild birds ran into the hearts of my crew,
Till they shouted along with the shouting and seized one another and slew;
But I drew them the one from the other; I saw that we could not stay,

And we left the dead to the birds and we sail'd with our wounded away.

v.

And we came to the Isle of Flowers: their breath met us out on the seas,

For the Spring and the middle Summer sat each on the lap of the breeze;

And the red passion-flower to the cliffs, and the dark-blue clematis, clung,

And starr'd with a myriad blossom the long convolvulus hung;

And the topmost spire of the mountain was lilies in lieu of snow,

And the lilies like glaciers winded down, running out below

Thro' the fire of the tulip and poppy, the blaze of gorse, and the blush

Of millions of roses that sprang without leaf or a thorn from the bush;

And the whole isle-side flashing down from the peak without ever a tree

Swept like a torrent of gems from the sky to the blue of the sea;

And we roll'd upon capes of crocus and vaunted our kith and our kin,

And we wallow'd in beds of lilies, and chanted the triumph of Finn,

Till each like a golden image was pollen'd from head to feet

And each was as dry as a cricket, with thirst in the middle-day heat.

Blossom and blossom, and promise of blossom, but never a fruit!

And we hated the Flowering Isle, as we hated the isle that was mute,

And we tore up the flowers by the million and flung them in bight and bay,

And we left but a naked rock, and in anger we sail'd away.

VI.

And we came to the Isle of Fruits: all round from the cliffs and the capes,

Purple or amber, dangled a hundred fathom of grapes,

And the warm melon lay like a little sun on the tawny sand,

And the fig ran up from the beach and rioted over the land,

And the mountain arose like a jewell'd throne thro' the fragrant air,

Glowing with all-colour'd plums and with golden masses of pear,

And the crimson and scarlet of berries that flamed upon bine and vine,

But in every berry and fruit was the poisonous pleasure of wine;

And the peak of the mountain was apples, the hugest that ever were seen,

And they prest, as they grew, on each other, with hardly a leaflet between,

And all of them redder than rosiest health or than utterest shame,

And setting, when Even descended, the very sunset aflame;

And we stay'd three days, and we gorged and we madden'd, till every one drew

His sword on his fellow to slay him, and ever they struck and they slew;

And myself, I had eaten but sparely, and fought till I sunder'd the fray,

Then I bad them remember my father's death, and we sail'd away.

VII.

And we came to the Isle of Fire: we were lured by the light from afar,

For the peak sent up one league of fire to the Northern Star;

Lured by the glare and the blare, but scarcely could stand upright,

For the whole isle shudder'd and shook like a man in a mortal affright;

We were giddy besides with the fruits we had gorged, and so crazed that at last

There were some leap'd into the fire; and away we sail'd, and we past

Over that undersea isle, where the water is clearer than air:

Down we look'd: what a garden! O bliss, what a Paradise there!

Towers of a happier time, low down in a rainbow deep

Silent palaces, quiet fields of eternal sleep!

And three of the gentlest and best of my people, whate'er I could say,

Plunged head down in the sea, and the Paradise trembled away.

VIII.

And we came to the Bounteous Isle, where the heavens lean low on the land,

And ever at dawn from the cloud glitter'd o'er us a sunbright hand,

Then it open'd and dropt at the side of each man, as he rose from his rest,

Bread enough for his need till the labourless day dipt under the West;

And we wander'd about it and thro' it. O never was time so good!

And we sang of the triumphs of Finn, and the boast of our ancient blood,

And we gazed at the wandering wave as we sat by the gurgle of springs,

And we chanted the songs of the Bards and the glories of fairy kings;

But at length we began to be weary, to sigh, and to stretch and yawn,

Till we hated the Bounteous Isle and the sunbright hand of the dawn,

For there was not an enemy near, but the whole green Isle was our own,

And we took to playing at ball, and we took to throwing the stone,

And we took to playing at battle, but that was a perilous play,

For the passion of battle was in us, we slew and we sail'd away.

IX.

And we past to the Isle of Witches and heard their musical cry—

'Come to us, O come, come' in the stormy red of a sky

Dashing the fires and the shadows of dawn on the beautiful shapes,

For a wild witch naked as heaven stood on each of the loftiest capes,

And a hundred ranged on the rock like white sea-birds in a row,

And a hundred gamboll'd and pranced on the wrecks in the sand below,

And a hundred splash'd from the ledges, and bosom'd
the burst of the spray,
But I knew we should fall on each other, and hastily
sail'd away.

x.

And we came in an evil time to the Isle of the Double
Towers,
One was of smooth-cut stone, one carved all over with
flowers,
But an earthquake always moved in the hollows under
the dells,
And they shock'd on each other and butted each other
with clashing of bells,
And the daws flew out of the Towers and jangled and
wrangled in vain,
And the clash and boom of the bells rang into the
heart and the brain,
Till the passion of battle was on us, and all took sides
with the Towers,

There were some for the clean-cut stone, there were more for the carven flowers,

And the wrathful thunder of God peal'd over us all the day,

For the one half slew the other, and after we sail'd away.

XI.

And we came to the Isle of a Saint who had sail'd with St. Brendan of yore,

He had lived ever since on the Isle and his winters were fifteen score,

And his voice was low as from other worlds, and his eyes were sweet,

And his white hair sank to his heels and his white beard fell to his feet,

And he spake to me, 'O Maeldune, let be this purpose of thine!

Remember the words of the Lord when he told us "Vengeance is mine!"

His fathers have slain thy fathers in war or in single strife,

Thy fathers have slain his fathers, each taken a life for a life,

Thy father had slain his father, how long shall the murder last?

Go back to the Isle of Finn and suffer the Past to be Past.'

And we kiss'd the fringe of his beard and we pray'd as we heard him pray,

And the Holy man he assoil'd us, and sadly we sail'd away.

XII.

And we came to the Isle we were blown from, and there on the shore was he,

The man that had slain my father. I saw him and let him be.

O weary was I of the travel, the trouble, the strife and the sin,

When I landed again, with a tithe of my men, on the Isle of Finn.

DE PROFUNDIS:

THE TWO GREETINGS.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Where all that was to be, in all that was,
Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast
Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddying light—
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,
And every phase of ever-heightening life,
And nine long months of antenatal gloom;
With this last moon, this crescent—her dark orb
Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest, darling boy;
Our own; a babe in lineament and limb
Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man;
Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,

Indissolubly married like our love;
Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve
This mortal race thy kin so well, that men
May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life
Breaking with laughter from the dark; and may
The fated channel where thy motion lives
Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course
Along the years of haste and random youth
Unshatter'd; then full-current thro' full man;
And last in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,
By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,
To that last deep where we and thou are still.

II.

I.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that great deep, before our world begins,
Whereon the Spirit of God moves as he will—
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
From that true world within the world we see,

Whereof our world is but the bounding shore—
Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,
With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden sun
Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

II.

For in the world, which is not ours, They said
'Let us make man' and that which should be man,
From that one light no man can look upon,
Drew to this shore lit by the suns and moons
And all the shadows. O dear Spirit half-lost
In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign
That thou art thou—who wailest being born
And banish'd into mystery, and the pain
Of this divisible-indivisible world
Among the numerable-innumerable
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space
In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil
And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,
Who made thee unconceivably Thyself
Out of His whole World-self and all in all—

Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the grape
And ivyberry, choose; and still depart
From death to death thro' life and life, and find
Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought
Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,
But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,
With power on thine own act and on the world.

THE HUMAN CRY.

I.

HALLOWED be Thy name—Halleluiah!—
Infinite Ideality!
Immeasurable Reality!
Infinite Personality!
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah!

II.

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and in Thee;
We feel we are something—*that* also has come from Thee;
We know we are nothing—but Thou will help us to be.
Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah!

PREFATORY SONNET

TO THE 'NINETEENTH CENTURY.'

THOSE that of late had fleeted far and fast
To touch all shores, now leaving to the skill
Of others their old craft seaworthy still,
Have charter'd this; where, mindful of the past,
Our true co-mates regather round the mast;
Of diverse tongue, but with a common will
Here, in this roaring moon of daffodil
And crocus, to put forth and brave the blast;
For some, descending from the sacred peak
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued again
Their lot with ours to rove the world about;
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to seek
If any golden harbour be for men
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of Doubt.

TO THE REV. W. H. BROOKFIELD.

BROOKS, for they call'd you so that knew you best,
Old Brooks, who loved so well to mouth my rhymes,
How oft we two have heard St. Mary's chimes!
How oft the Cantab supper, host and guest,
Would echo helpless laughter to your jest!
How oft with him we paced that walk of limes,
Him, the lost light of those dawn-golden times,
Who loved you well! Now both are gone to rest.
You man of humorous-melancholy mark,
Dead of some inward agony—is it so?
Our kindlier, trustier Jaques, past away!
I cannot laud this life, it looks so dark:
Σκιᾶς ὄναρ—dream of a shadow, go—
God bless you. I shall join you in a day.

MONTENEGRO.

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, arm'd by day and night
Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere scales
Their headlong passes, but his footstep fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone flight
By thousands down the crags and thro' the vales.
O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

TO VICTOR HUGO.

VICTOR in Drama, Victor in Romance,
Cloud-weaver of phantasmal hopes and fears,
French of the French, and Lord of human tears;
Child-lover; Bard whose fame-lit laurels glance
Darkening the wreaths of all that would advance,
Beyond our strait, their claim to be thy peers;
Weird Titan by thy winter weight of years
As yet unbroken, stormy voice of France!
Who dost not love our England—so they say;
I know not—England, France, all man to be
Will make one people ere man's race be run:
And I, desiring that diviner day,
Yield thee full thanks for thy full courtesy
To younger England in the boy my son.

TRANSLATIONS, ETC.

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Constantinus, King of the Scots, after having sworn allegiance to Athelstan, allied himself with the Danes of Ireland under Anlaf, and invading England, was defeated by Athelstan and his brother Edmund with great slaughter at Brunanburh in the year 937.

I.

[1] ATHELSTAN King,
Lord among Earls,
Bracelet-bestower and
Baron of Barons,
He with his brother,
Edmund Atheling,
Gaining a lifelong
Glory in battle,

[1] I have more or less availed myself of my son's prose translation of this poem in the *Contemporary Review* (November 1876).

Slew with the sword-edge
There by Brunanburh,
Brake the shield-wall,
Hew'd the lindenwood,[1]
Hack'd the battleshield,
Sons of Edward with hammer'd brands.

II.

Theirs was a greatness
Got from their Grandsires—
Theirs that so often in
Strife with their enemies
Struck for their hoards and their hearths and their homes.

III.

Bow'd the spoiler,
Bent the Scotsman,
Fell the shipcrews
Doom'd to the death.

[1] Shields of lindenwood.

All the field with blood of the fighters
Flow'd, from when first the great
Sun-star of morningtide,
Lamp of the Lord God
Lord everlasting,
Glode over earth till the glorious creature
Sank to his setting.

IV.

There lay many a man
Marr'd by the javelin,
Men of the Northland
Shot over shield.
There was the Scotsman
Weary of war.

V.

We the West-Saxons,
Long as the daylight
Lasted, in companies

Troubled the track of the host that we hated,
Grimly with swords that were sharp from the grind-
stone,
Fiercely we hack'd at the flyers before us.

VI.

Mighty the Mercian,
Hard was his hand-play,
Sparing not any of
Those that with Anlaf,
Warriors over the
Weltering waters
Borne in the bark's-bosom,
Drew to this island:
Doom'd to the death.

VII.

Five young kings put asleep by the sword-stroke,
Seven strong Earls of the army of Anlaf
Fell on the war-field, numberless numbers,
Shipmen and Scotsmen.

VIII.

Then the Norse leader,
Dire was his need of it,
Few were his following,
Fled to his warship:
Fleeted his vessel to sea with the king in it,
Saving his life on the fallow flood.

IX.

Also the crafty one,
Constantinus,
Crept to his North again,
Hoar-headed hero!

X.

Slender warrant had
He to be proud of
The welcome of war-knives—
He that was reft of his
Folk and his friends that had

Fallen in conflict,
Leaving his son too
Lost in the carnage,
Mangled to morsels,
A youngster in war!

XI.

Slender reason had
He to be glad of
The clash of the war-glaive—
Traitor and trickster
And spurner of treaties—
He nor had Anlaf
With armies so broken
A reason for bragging
That they had the better
In perils of battle
On places of slaughter—
The struggle of standards,
The rush of the javelins,

The crash of the charges,[1]
The wielding of weapons—
The play that they play'd with
The children of Edward.

XII.

Then with their nail'd prows
Parted the Norsemen, a
Blood-redden'd relic of
Javelins over
The jarring breaker, the deep-sea billow,
Shaping their way toward Dyflen[2] again,
Shamed in their souls.

XIII.

Also the brethren,
King and Atheling,
Each in his glory,
Went to his own in his own West-Saxonland,
Glad of the war.

[1] Lit. 'the gathering of men.' [2] Dublin.

XIV.

Many a carcase they left to be carrion,
Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin—
Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it, and
Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend it, and
Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge it, and
That gray beast, the wolf of the weald.

XV.

Never had huger
Slaughter of heroes
Slain by the sword-edge—
Such as old writers
Have writ of in histories—
Hapt in this isle, since
Up from the East hither
Saxon and Angle from
Over the broad billow
Broke into Britain with

BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH.

Haughty war-workers who
Harried the Welshman, when
Earls that were lured by the
Hunger of glory gat
Hold of the land.

ACHILLES OVER THE TRENCH.

ILIAD, xviii. 202.

So saying, light-foot Iris pass'd away.
Then rose Achilles dear to Zeus; and round
The warrior's puissant shoulders Pallas flung
Her fringed ægis, and around his head
The glorious goddess wreath'd a golden cloud,
And from it lighted an all-shining flame.
As when a smoke from a city goes to heaven
Far off from out an island girt by foes,
All day the men contend in grievous war
From their own city, but with set of sun
Their fires flame thickly, and aloft the glare
Flies streaming, if perchance the neighbours round
May see, and sail to help them in the war;
So from his head the splendour went to heaven.

From wall to dyke he stept, he stood, nor join'd
The Achæans—honouring his wise mother's word—
There standing, shouted, and Pallas far away
Call'd; and a boundless panic shook the foe.
For like the clear voice when a trumpet shrills,
Blown by the fierce beleaguers of a town,
So rang the clear voice of Æakidês;
And when the brazen cry of Æakidês
Was heard among the Trojans, all their hearts
Were troubled, and the full-maned horses whirl'd
The chariots backward, knowing griefs at hand;
And sheer-astounded were the charioteers
To see the dread, unwearible fire
That always o'er the great Peleion's head
Burn'd, for the bright-eyed goddess made it burn.
Thrice from the dyke he sent his mighty shout,
Thrice backward reel'd the Trojans and allies;
And there and then twelve of their noblest died
Among their spears and chariots.

TO PRINCESS FREDERICA ON HER MARRIAGE.

O you that were eyes and light to the King till he past away
From the darkness of life—
He saw not his daughter—he blest her: the blind King sees you to-day,
He blesses the wife.

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.

ON THE CENOTAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Not here! the white North has thy bones; and thou,
Heroic sailor-soul,
Art passing on thine happier voyage now
Toward no earthly pole.

TO DANTE.

(WRITTEN AT REQUEST OF THE FLORENTINES.)

KING, that hast reign'd six hundred years, and grown
In power, and ever growest, since thine own
Fair Florence honouring thy nativity,
Thy Florence now the crown of Italy,
Hath sought the tribute of a verse from me,
I, wearing but the garland of a day,
Cast at thy feet one flower that fades away.

END OF VOL. IV.